



NCPA
Quarterly Journal

Vol. XII, 1, March 1983

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Quarterly Journal

Volume XII

Number 1

March 1983

CONTENTS

Lie and Glorious Adjective (Interview with Peter Brook on the theme of masks)	1
The Concepts of <i>Anukarana</i> , <i>Anukirtana</i> and <i>Anudarshana</i> in Abhinavagupta's Theory of Aesthetics—R. K. Shringy	18
Interview with Yehudi Menuhin	24
In Memory of Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967)—Tibor Sárai	33
News and Notes	40
Book Reviews	51
Record Reviews	56

The contributions to this issue include:

An interview with Peter Brook, the renowned director, with outstanding achievements in theatre, opera and film.

An investigation into Abhinavagupta's aesthetic concepts by Dr. R. K. Shringy of the Department of Musicology, Banaras Hindu University.

An interview in Bombay with Yehudi Menuhin, who has become a legend in his own time, not only as a brilliant musician, but also as a writer, historian and humanist.

A tribute to Zoltán Kodály by Tibor Sárjai, formerly Secretary General of the International Music Council, UNESCO.

Reports on the Dagar Saptak, *Dhrupad* Festival, Bhopal; International Seminar and Workshop on Indian Dance Traditions and Modern Theatre, Calcutta; and Koodiyattom Festival, Irinjalakuda.

Book Reviews by N. Ramanathan, musicologist, Lecturer, Department of Indian Music, University of Madras, and Indrani Chakravarti, Head of the Department of Music, Himachal Pradesh University.

Record Reviews by Bhaskar Chandavarkar, sitarist and innovative composer of stage and film music.



Lie and Glorious Adjective

An interview with Peter Brook on the theme of masks

[We are very happy to reproduce here an interview with Peter Brook which appeared in *PARABOLA* and grateful to both for permission to print it in the *Quarterly Journal*.

— Editor]

PARABOLA: I was talking with Arthur Amiotte about the theme for this issue, and he suggested that it went beyond the mask itself and included the whole idea of something "in the image of..."

PETER BROOK: Yes, that is interesting; because it's obvious that there are masks and masks. There is something very noble, very mysterious, very

The views expressed in the *Quarterly Journal* of the National Centre for the Performing Arts are those of the authors and do not necessarily conform to the views of the publishers. Permission to reproduce, in whole or part, any material published in this *Journal* must be obtained from The Editor, *Quarterly Journal*, National Centre for the Performing Arts, Nariman Point, Bombay-400 021.

Price: Rs. 10 India; £ 2.00 United Kingdom; \$ 5 U.S.A.

extraordinary, which is the mask, and something disgusting, something really sordid, nauseating (and very common to the Western art theater) which is also called a mask. They are similar because they are both things you put on your face, but they are as different as health and disease. There is a mask which is lifegiving, that affects the wearer and the observer in a very positive way; and there is another thing that can be put on the face of a distorted human being that makes him even more distorted, and gives an impression to a distorted observer of a reality even more distorted than the one he sees ordinarily! And both go under the same name, "masks," and to the casual observer look very similar. I think it has now become an almost universally accepted cliché that we all wear masks all the time; but the moment one accepts that as being true, and begins to ask oneself questions about it, one sees that the usual facial expression either conceals (so it's a mask in that sense) that it's not in tune with what is really going on inside, or it is a decorated account: it presents the inner process in a more flattering or attractive light; it gives a lying version. A weak person puts on a strong face, or vice versa. The everyday expression is a mask in the sense that it's either a concealment or a lie; it is not in harmony with the inner movement. So if one's face is operating so well as a mask, what's the purpose of putting on another face?

But in fact, if one takes these two categories, the horrible mask and the good mask, one sees that they operate in quite different ways. The horrible mask is the one most continually used in the Western theater. What happens here is that an individual, usually a scene designer, is asked to design a mask. He works from one thing only, which is his own subjective fantasy; what else can he do? So someone sits in front of a drawing board and draws out of his own subconscious one of his own million lying or distorted or sentimental masks and then pops it onto another person. So you have something that in a way is even worse than one's own lie—one is lying through the external image of someone else's lie. However, what is worse yet is that because another person's lie comes not from the surface but from the subconscious, it is basically even nastier, because you are lying through another person's fantasy life. And that is where almost all masks that you see, in the ballet and so on, have something morbid about them; because it is an aspect of the subjective subconscious—frozen. So you have this picture impression of something inanimate and basically belonging to the hidden area of personal hangups and frustrations.

Now the traditional mask works exactly the other way round. The traditional mask in essence isn't a "mask" at all, because it is an image of the essential nature. In other words, a traditional mask is a portrait of a man without a mask.

For instance, the Balinese masks that we used in *The Conference of the Birds* are realistic masks, in the sense that, unlike the African masks, the features are not distorted; they are completely naturalistic. What one sees is that the person who designs them, exactly like the person who sculpts the heads in Bunraku, has behind him thousands of years of tradition in which human types are observed with *such* precision that you can see that if the craftsman reproducing them, generation after generation, goes one millimeter to the right or to the left, he is no longer reproducing the

essential type but a personal value. But if he is absolutely true to this traditional knowledge—which you could call a traditional psychological classification of man, an absolute knowledge of the essential types—you find that what is called a mask should be called an anti-mask. The traditional mask is an actual portrait, a soul-portrait, a photograph of what you rarely see, only in truly evolved human beings: an outer casing that is a complete and sensitive reflection of the inner life. So because of this, in a mask carved in such a way, whether a Bunraku head or a Balinese realistic mask, the first characteristic is that there is nothing morbid about it. There is no impression, even when you see one hanging on the wall, of a shrunken head—no impression of death. It is not a death mask. On the contrary, these masks, although motionless, seem to be breathing life. Provided the actor goes through certain steps that we will talk about in a moment, the moment he wears the mask it becomes alive in an infinite number of ways. A mask of this order has this extraordinary characteristic that the moment it is on a human head, if the human being inside is sensitive to its meaning, it has an absolutely inexhaustible quantity of expressions. We found this while we were rehearsing with them. When the mask is hanging on the wall, a person could—crudely and falsely—put adjectives to it, saying, "Ah, this is the proud man." You put the mask on, and you can no longer say, "This is the proud man," because it could have looks of humility, it could have humility sliding into gentleness; those vast staring eyes can express aggressivity or they can express fear; it is endlessly, endlessly shifting—but *within* the purity and the intensity of the unmasked man whose deepest inner nature is constantly revealing itself, while the masked man's inner nature is continuously concealed. So in that way, I think the first basic paradox is that the true mask is the expression of somebody unmasked.

P.: *What effect does it have on the person wearing it?*

P.B.: I will speak from my experience with the Balinese mask, but I have to go back one step before that. One of the first, knockout exercises that you can do with actors, which is used in lots of theater schools where they use masks, is putting a plain, blank, white mask on someone. The moment you take someone's face away in that way, it's the most electrifying impression: suddenly to find oneself knowing that that thing one lives with, and which one knows is transmitting something all the time, is no longer there. It's the most extraordinary sense of liberation. It is one of those great exercises that whoever does for the first time counts as a great moment: to suddenly find oneself immediately for a certain time liberated from one's own subjectivity. And the awakening of a body awareness is immediately there with it, irresistibly; so that if you want to make an actor aware of his body, instead of explaining it to him and saying, "You have a body and you need to be aware of it," just put a bit of white paper on his face and say, "Now look around." He can't fail to be instantly aware of everything he normally forgets, because all the attention has been released from this great magnet up top.

Now to go back to the Balinese masks. When they arrived, the Balinese actor who was with us laid them out. All the actors, like children, threw themselves on the masks, put them on, started roaring with laughter,

looking at one another, looking in the mirror, fooling around—having a ball, like children when you open up the dressing-up hamper. I looked at the Balinese actor. He was appalled; he was standing there shell-shocked—because for him masks were sacred. He gave me a pleading look, and I stopped everybody short and just said a couple of words to remind everyone that these weren't just things out of a Christmas cracker. And because our group had worked long enough under different forms, the potential respect was there; it was just that in our typical Western way, one forgets; everybody was too over-enthusiastic and excited, but at the tiniest reminder they came back right away. But it was quite clear that within a matter of minutes the masks were being completely desacralized—because the masks will play any game you want, and what was interesting was that before I stopped them, when everyone was fooling around with them, the masks themselves appeared to be not much better than what you get out of a Christmas cracker—because that was what was being invested in them. A mask is two-way traffic all the time; it sends a message in and projects a message out. It operates by the laws of echoes: if the echo chamber is perfect, the sound going in and the one going out are reflections; there is a perfect relation between the echo chamber and the sound; but if it isn't, it is like a distorted mirror. Here, when the actors sent back a distorted response, the mask itself took on a distorted face. The minute they started again, with quiet and respect, the masks looked different and the people inside them *felt* different.

The great magic of the mask, which every actor receives from it, is that he *can't* tell what it looks like on him; he can't tell what impression he is making—and yet he knows. I have worn them a lot myself when we were working on them, for the sake of investigating at first hand this extraordinary impression. You do things and other people tell you afterwards: "It was extraordinary!" *You* don't know; you just wear it and you do certain movements and you don't know if there is any relation or not; and you know that you mustn't try to impose something. You somehow do and don't know, on a rational level; but the sensitivity to the mask exists in another way, and it's something that develops.

One of the techniques they use in Bali which is very interesting is that the Balinese actor starts by looking at a mask, holding it in his hands. He looks at it for a long while, until he and the mask begin to become like a reflection of each other; he begins to feel it partly as his own face—but not totally, because in another way he goes towards *its* independent life. And gradually he begins to move his hand so that the mask takes on a life, and he is watching it—he sort of empathizes with it. And then something may happen which none of our actors could even attempt (and it rarely happens even with the Balinese actor) which is that the breathing begins to modify; he begins to breathe differently with each mask. It's obvious, in a way, that each mask represents a certain type of person, with a certain body and a certain tempo and inner rhythm, and so a certain breathing; as he begins to feel this and as his hand begins to take on a corresponding tension, the breath changes till a certain *weight* of breathing begins to penetrate the actor's whole body; and when that is ready, he puts on the mask. And the whole shape is there.

Our actors can't do it that way—and shouldn't, because that belongs to a whole tradition and training. But in a different way, because they can't play on that sort of highly developed instrument of technique, they can develop something through pure sensitivity, with no knowledge of what are right or wrong forms. The actor takes the mask, studies it, and as he puts it on, his face slightly modifies itself until it goes towards the shape of the mask, and he puts it on his face and in a way he has dropped one of his own masks; so the intervening flesh masks disappear and the actor is in close contact, epidermal contact, with a face that is not his face, but the face of a very strong, essential type of man. And his actor's capacity to be a comedian (without which he couldn't be an actor) makes him realize his potentiality to *be* that person. So at that moment he is in that role. And that becomes *his* role; and the moment it is assumed, it comes to life, it is no longer hard and fast but something that adapts itself to any circumstance; so the actor, having put that mask on, is sufficiently in the character that if someone unexpectedly offers him a cup of tea, whatever response he makes is totally that of that type, not in the schematic sense but in the essential sense. For instance, if he's wearing a proud mask, in the schematic sense he would be forced to say proudly, "Take away your tea!" But in a living sense, the proudest of men can see a cup of tea and say, "Oh, thank you," and take it without betraying his essential nature.

P.: So is it possible for a Western actor to act in these Balinese masks? What happens?

P.B.: It is exactly the same as playing a role—exactly the same. A role is a meeting, a meeting between an actor as a mass of potentialities—and a catalyst. Because a role is a form of catalyst, from outside; it makes a demand, and draws into form the unformed potentiality of the actor. That is why the meeting between an actor and a role always produces a different result. Take a great role, like Hamlet: the nature of Hamlet on one hand makes an absolutely specific set of demands; the words are there and don't change from generation to generation. But at the same time, like a mask, although it looks as though it is set in its form, it is exactly the reverse. Its seeming to be a set form is only an outward appearance. In fact, it's something which, because it operates like a catalyst, when it encounters the human material which is the individual actor, it creates all the time new specifics. This meeting between the demand coming from the outside, which is the role that the actor is assuming, and the individuality of the actor, produces always a new series of combinations. So an oriental actor, a Balinese for example, if he has the basic sensitivity, understanding, openness, wish etc., can play Hamlet; and a great Balinese actor, bringing the whole of his human understanding to the part of Hamlet, *must* produce, second by second, something totally different from John Gielgud approaching the same thing, because it is a different meeting in different circumstances. But in each case, a truth of equal quality and of equal value can appear. In exactly the same way, a great mask put on a Balinese or on an American or on a Frenchman, given the same basic conditions of skill, sensitivity and sincerity, should produce results qualitatively equal, but, in terms of form, totally different.

P.: That makes me wonder: is there a difference in the use of mask in ritual and the use of mask in theater, where you are performing for different reasons?

P.B.: I think it goes through stages. I go back to the concrete experience we had: *The Conference of the Birds*, and why we had to use masks. We have always avoided them; I loathe masks in the theater, and I have never used them before, because every time I have even touched them it has been either Western masks or the idea of getting somebody to make masks, and I have always shied away from the idea of putting subjectivity onto subjectivity, which makes no sense at all. So in place of masks we have done everything with the actor's face—what better instrument do you have? But what we did up to the first time that we used masks was to work so that the actor's individuality appeared through his face; and that work is, by one technique or another, getting rid of his superficial masks. It would be virtually impossible to take a successful television character, let's say, and get his individuality to appear without a gruelling and perhaps highly dangerous process of smashing his masks, because his identification with certain successful facial expressions is so deeply ingrained, and so much part of his way of life and his stake in the world, that he couldn't let it go. But a young actor, for instance, who wants to develop, can recognize and eliminate his stereotypes—to a degree; and in doing so his face becomes a better mirror—in the way a Sufi would talk about his mirror becoming more polished, a cleaner mirror of what is happening inside his face. You see in many people that their faces reflect more rather than less of what is inside them. The use of the actor undisguised, without makeup, without costume, has been the trend of the experimental theater for the last twenty years or so; it has been to let the actor's nature appear—and one also sees that in the very best film acting; the actor uses on the surface what

2



he has deep inside him, and he allows the flicker of an eyelid to be a sensitive mirror of what is happening inside him. In that way, through training that doesn't go towards using an actor's *personality*, but on the contrary towards letting his personality make way for his *individuality*, the use of the face in a sensitive way makes the face less of a mask and more a reflector of that individuality.

However, we found—which is why we turned to masks—that there is a point where the actor's individuality comes up against his own natural human limitations. A talented actor can improvise upto the level of his talent. But that doesn't mean that he can improvise King Lear, because his talent doesn't reach beyond his normal range of experience to *that* range. So he can't improvise King Lear, but he can *meet* King Lear if the role is given to him. In the same way, an actor can improvise with his face, and that will reflect anything within his normal circle of emotions, responses and experiences. But, for instance, if in *The Conference of the Birds* I ask one of our actors to find the face that corresponds with an old dervish, the leap is too great. He can have the beginning of an intellectual understanding of what it is about, he can have a beginning of respect for what that could mean, but he hasn't got what is needed to be able, unaided, without imagery of any sort, and without a great part like a great Greek or Shakespearian role, just by thinking and feeling to turn his face into the illuminated face of an old dervish. He can go, let's say, one step in a direction that needs a thousand steps. And it is at that point that you see that the skill of one of our actors (obviously one has to face the reality unpretentiously) can't equal the skill of the carver of the mask fed by a thousand years of tradition. So for our actor to be able to say, "There was once an old dervish . . ." and then extend that image in the public's mind by showing his face as being the face of that old dervish, he can go one step in that direction, but by putting on the traditional mask he leaps a light year ahead, because he is drawn immediately by the mask to something he can understand when it is given to him, but he can't creatively impose on himself.

To connect with your idea of ritual: In terms of theater, in *The Conference of the Birds* we used birds when we saw that a big, fat actor flapping his hands doesn't convey flight as well as it can be conveyed, momentarily, by his holding a little object and suggesting flight with it, when for a moment what you want is the image of flight; but at another moment you don't want that, you want the humanity of the person and then you come back to the actor. In the same way we found, having rehearsed with and without masks (which is why we put them on and off), that there were moments when the natural, ordinary reality of the actor is better than the mask; because you don't want all the time the exalted impression. It is like using adjectives: there are moments when a good style is naked and uses very simple words, and there is a moment when without a glorious adjective the sentence can't make its point; and the mask is suddenly a glorious adjective that exalts the entire sentence.

Now, we are talking here all the time about masks that in their very nature are so-called realistic, naturalistic masks. And what amazed me when I saw the Balinese masks for the first time was to see that although

they come from a very specific, local culture, they don't actually look primarily oriental. When you look at those masks you see, first and foremost, Old Man—Beautiful Girl—Sad Man—Astonished Man—and then only secondarily, you see: oh yes, they are oriental. This is why we could actually do something which in theory is impossible, which is to use a Balinese mask to express a Persian story—which from a purist point of view would be called shocking, scandalous, a total disregard of tradition. In theory, yes; but once one is dealing with certain essential strands, it is like in cooking—things that in theory you can't combine, in practice can be combined very well. In this case, because these masks were expressing certain specific *but universal* human characteristics, put in relation to a certain text that is talking about certain specific human characteristics, the two go together like bread and butter, and there is no mixture of tradition because tradition doesn't come into it.

On the other hand, when you are dealing with non-naturalistic masks, you are dealing with something very delicate. Non-naturalistic masks, I think, again fall into two categories. There are the masks that are so strictly coded that they are like a series of words in a foreign language—so highly ritualized that unless you know the language of the signs, you lose nine-tenths of its meaning. All you see is that it is very impressive. Some African or New Guinea masks, for instance, have something very impressive about them, but one can very easily miss the real force of what those masks are saying unless one knows the whole tradition that is behind them and the context in which they are appearing. And I think it is very easy for us to sentimentalize our approach to masks, the way people do who buy one just to hang it on the wall. It is a beautiful wall decoration, but what a degraded use of something whose signs, if read, are something infinitely more significant!

But there is another type of mask, where these two categories overlap: one that in a specific way is also reflecting inner experience, but not inner *psychological* experience. In other words, you can say that there is the type of mask that we have been talking about so far, which shows fundamental psychological types of man through very exact, realistic description of his features. And that is a concealed man that is being shown. But then you can say that there is another concealed inner man, that could be called the essential deity inside each person—in the sense of the traditional societies where you have a thousand gods, each a face of the emotional potential inside each person. So you have, for instance, a mask that is the expression of maternity—the mask that expresses the fundamental maternal principle. Now, that expression goes beyond the picture of the benign mother, which one sees in paintings of the Virgin and Child which go no farther than the benign mother with a kindly look. You go from that to the icon, for instance, where there is something more essential and more fundamental; the essential quality is there in something that is no longer reflected naturalistically, where the proportions begin to change, until you get into all the range of statues with eyes five times bigger than the nose and so on—and within that, there is a form of mask that is ritualized and is on a knife-edge of having a possible theatrical use. This is just the area where these two categories overlap. There is the



mask which doesn't look like a face in the normal sense of the word—like in a Picasso painting with five sets of eyes one on top of the other and three flat noses—yet which, worn by a person sensitive to its nature, still expresses an aspect of the human condition, in a way beyond the capacity of any actor to show, because no actor can exalt himself to that degree. It is just like the difference between straight speech, for an actor, and poetic speech, and some declamation, and chant: these are all steps towards a more powerful, essential, less everyday expression which still can be totally real if it reflects a truth of human nature. And in that way it is possible to use masks—but that is something so delicate; it is something I would be very interested in exploring when we get to the *Mahabharata*, knowing how explosive and dangerous it is. We have one Balinese mask of that sort, a very ferocious sort of demon mask, and we have just used it amongst ourselves in rehearsal, with everybody feeling the incredible forces that are let loose just by putting it on—and that there one is going into a big area. For us, for instance, in the *Mahabharata*, we have to find the theatrical version of presenting a god. It is quite clear that an ordinary actor pretending to be a god is ridiculous. One sees that even in productions of *The Tempest* where a lot of girls try to be goddesses; *The Tempest* is usually a disaster. So you have to turn to something that can help you, and the first thing is a mask that contains forces in it and evokes stronger forces than the actor can evoke himself. I have never seen them used in the Western theater in this way, and I think it is something very dangerous for us to approach without a lot of experiment and understanding. In the East or in Africa, this kind of mask is used more in ritual but in a sense for the same purpose, which is to bring into the open abstract things that otherwise are just called forces, so that they take on flesh and blood.

Now that I've talked for an hour, I think I can put into one phrase more simply what I've been trying to say all along: the naturalistic mask expresses essential human types, and the non-naturalistic mask embodies forces.

P.: How do you see the danger you were speaking of? Can you specify exactly?

P.B.: It's a funny sort of danger. Masks really do radiate power; and if someone is sufficiently sensitive to them, he's not likely to use them badly; but it's possible, and there could be psychic dangers from using something too strong for you. On the other hand, with somebody insensitive to them, it's like a thief stealing something from an altar: the chances are not that he'll be punished by a thunder-bolt, but just that whoever desecrates something simply contributes his little drop to pulling the world a little lower. So I think the greatest danger is just cheapening.

P.: The man is also in that danger.

P.B.: Yes, of being cheapened.

P.: Returning to my former question: it seems the mask can really have an effect on the wearer, and at least for the moment it is worn it is a sort of transforming agent.

P.B.: Absolutely.

P.: Can it have more than a momentary effect, do you think?

P.B.: It depends on what people bring to it.

P.: I am suddenly remembering a story, without the faintest recollection of its source. It was about a man who is horribly, painfully ugly, so ugly that he shocks and frightens people. So he wears a mask with the face of a beautiful saint; and he tries very hard to conform himself to this mask, and to be the beautiful saint. Then—I can't remember whether it is the woman he falls in love with, or who it is, but someone realizes that he is wearing a mask and tears it off his face. He is crushed at the thought that his real ugliness is now revealed—and then, to his amazement, the other person says, "But why did you wear a mask when it is just like your own face?" He has become what the mask represented.

P.B.: That's marvelous.

P.: But what story is that?

P.B.: I never heard it before! But it is a beautiful story, and I'm glad to hear it today.

P.: I hoped you could tell me where I read it!

P.B.: You know, what is interesting is that, like a lot of great basic stories, it could exist in two versions. It could have the other ending, and be a negative story; and I'm sure if you look through different traditions you would find both: the one that when the mask is pulled off, he is left as a sort of angry monster, because in all those years he only wanted the appearance of saintliness—he never really wanted sufficiently to go all the way; so when the mask goes, he is a Caliban again. And the other ending, the beautiful one, which is that he has lived it so truly that when it is taken away, he is still what he seemed before. The story could be expressed with the two different possibilities that are always there, in the degree to which the wearer is responsible to his mask.

P.: I was just thinking along those lines: suppose that there is an ideal mask—a mask of the ideal mother or father or any human relation—the objective fact of a relationship. What could take the place of a mask, in real life, if one wished to conform oneself to this objective fact, this sort of paradigm of a relation? Is there such a thing in real life? What would a real-life mask be?

P.B.: I think that there is something extremely interesting here—which is that the mask is an *apparent* immobilizing of elements that in nature are in movement. It is very curious; the whole question of the life or death of the mask is there. A mask is like a frame of a movie of a running horse: it puts into *apparently* static form something which, in fact, viewed in the proper way, is the expression of something in movement. So motherly love is shown as a static expression; but the real-life equivalent is an action, not an expression. To go back to the icon: if we wanted to show a real-life woman with the equivalent of what the icon is reflecting, we would not try to find a woman whose face or whose look toward a child has that expression, but we might follow Mother Teresa, from behind, with a

camera, as she goes through her hospital. And it would be through the actions over a stretch of time that one would find the equivalent. It would be certain attitudes, movements, relationships in *time*; so that motherly love in life is not a snapshot, but an action or a series of actions in time, within a duration. And there is an apparent denial of time in the compression of that into an *apparently* frozen form, in a mask, or a painting, or a statue; but the glory of it, when it is on a certain level of quality, is that the frozenness is only a delusion, which disappears the moment the mask is put again on a human face, because then one sees this curious characteristic of its having endless movement contained within it.

P.: *It's extraordinary how a Bunraku puppet also changes its expression when it is moved.*

P.B.: You know, there are Egyptian statues showing a king taking one step forward, and you actually *see* movement. And you see a million attempts to do the same thing in every town square in the world, a statue of a man who has got one foot forward and there it stays, and he is *never* going to move the other foot!

P.: *Have you ever had the experience of watching an actor get larger or smaller? I have seen it happen once or twice, and I was absolutely astonished; I was sure it was several people who were doing this and producing the illusion.*

P.B.: But look at the greatest example of all—and heaven help any actor who tries to use it in the theater—the great Buddha statues, those vast stone Buddhas in the Himalayas, for instance. There is a head which is a human head, because it has eyes and nose, and mouth, and cheeks; it sits on a neck; it has all the characteristics of a mask; it is not made out of flesh and blood but other material, it isn't alive, and it's motionless. On the other hand, is it concealing inner nature? Not a bit of it; it is the highest impression one knows of the expression of inner nature. Is it naturalistic? Not quite, because we don't know anybody that looks quite like the Buddha; but is it fantasticated? No; you couldn't even say it is idealized—and yet it is not like any human being one knows. It is a potential—a human being totally fulfilled and realized. The mask there is in repose, but is not like a dead person; on the contrary, it is the repose of something in which the currents of life are circulating all the time, over thousands of years. And it's quite clear that if you took one of those Buddhas and sliced off the head and hollowed it out and made it into a mask, and put it on an actor, either the actor would pull it down—because of his incapacity to support that head—or he would rise up to it. Therefore it would be an absolutely exact measure of the level of his potential understanding. Each person, even with the help of the mask, can go only so far, and a young acolyte wearing the mask would express something quite different from the great master. So the mask would be pulled down or the person would be pulled up exactly, scientifically, in accordance with what he has and what he brings.

This is very much the way possession takes place among the Yorubas. In their tradition, when you assume the role that you are inhabited,

you have to rise to meet what is inhabiting you, and you serve the god to the degree that you can consciously bring to him. So again, a beginner inhabited by a god will dance differently, and express something different, from the master. It is exactly the same relation with the mask.

P.: *But afterwards—is the person changed?*

P.B.: Not if he is out for kicks! It depends on him. Something that has always fascinated me about actors is that they can go on playing parts all their lives and not be changed at all, because they are not interested—they haven't gone into the theater for that. This is an expression of the decadence of our theater; once it splits away completely from the temple, from any wider context, it becomes a great art form, yes, but the person practicing it has no longer any motivation to link it to more than a successful practice of the art. So why should he become a more developed or a wiser man through playing a whole variety of parts? But the actor who goes into the theater as a field for growth goes through the same experience quite differently, because he is listening to his experience in a different way; so of course he retains something differently.

P.: *Then the question we asked before, about the difference between theater and ritual, depends on the person practicing them? Theater can be ritual—theater can be the "hall of God" which its name really means—or it can be just a way to get rich and famous.*

P.B.: Yes, that's it.

P.: *You will be working more with masks, with the Mahabharata?*

P.B.: Yes, I saw this year some fascinating masks from Korea and Bhutan, both of which were quite different from the Balinese. Some of them were completely antinaturalistic, and yet at the same time they were actors' masks that weren't just making coded statements. For instance, the makeup in the Kathakali is more a coded statement than a human expression—you know, a red nose and great streaks across the face—like in the Japanese masks also, the fact that there is a red band and then a green band has an intellectual meaning attached, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they actually contain in their nature or essence that impression. Those masks are what I would call cultural masks; they are not the expression of a human impulse, but of cultural fact.

P.: *Like the body paintings in Australia and Africa.*

P.B.: Yes.

P.: *Even those, in a way, retain something of what you have been talking about. As I understand it, very often with the Aborigines the body painting is an effort to illustrate the dream experience on an external level. I don't know if this is attached to any particular ritual, but it is an attempt to externalize an inner reality in a very abstract way.*

P.B.: Yes, but through codes.

P.: *Which are understood intellectually.*

P.B.: It's very interesting to see that behind a cultural expression there is either

this very specific, intellectual code, or something that is still specific but universal, so it can be touched by any human being anywhere and make the same impression, like certain very simple melodies that can really be felt and understood. We found that you have to come to melodies and rhythms of one or two notes to be at the point which is most universally understandable. At the other end of the scale, you have something like contemporary Western music, which is in its way as intellectual as these body paintings, and you have to know the whole intellectual structure to understand it. Without that you really can't feel it directly.

P.: *There's an interesting question also about the mask being used both for concealment and for revelation. Is it concealing one level and revealing another, or what is that? Because it does seem to do both.*

P.B.: It liberates the person by taking away their habitual forms, as we were saying before; and that's related to an experience I had in Rio. When I was in Brazil I asked a lot of questions about what possession was among the Macumba and others. Their possession, unlike the Yorubas but just like in Haiti, seems entirely based on the person losing all consciousness. I asked a very sophisticated young priest in Bahia whether it was possible for them to retain any consciousness at all when they are possessed, and he said, "No, thank God!"

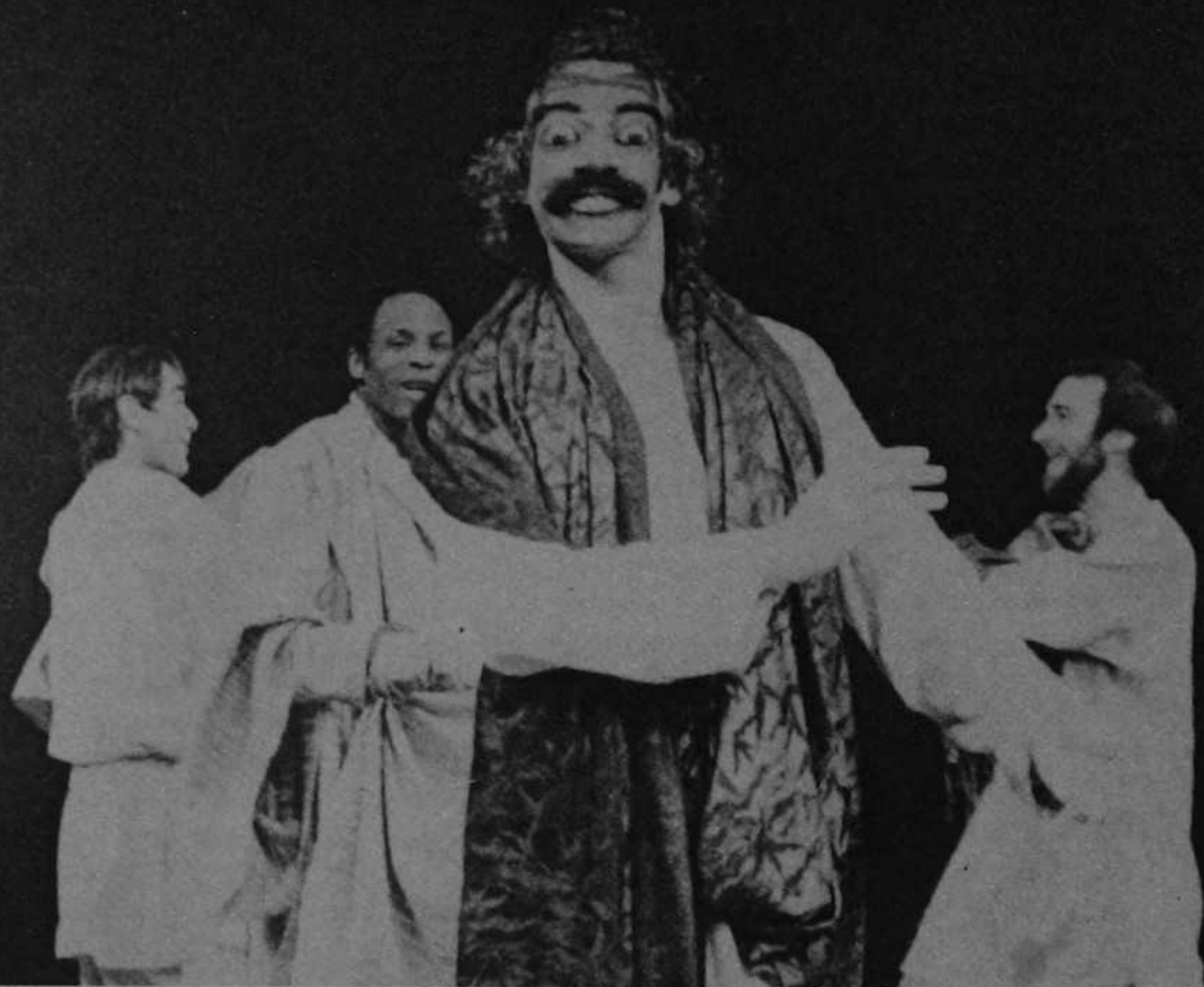
In Rio I went one night to a ceremony—it was a Friday night, when there were about nine thousand little ceremonies on all the little back streets. This was on a very little back street—I was taken by a local girl who knew her way—and here one went into the equivalent of a sort of nonconformist church, in voodoo terms. It was a little room with rows of chairs laid out rather like a mission hall, and people waiting, and numbers were called out. When you come in, you ask to have your name put down, you are given a number, and when that number is called by somebody with a little loudspeaker, you go to the end of the room where there is something like the altar part of a little chapel, but where in fact nine people are standing. They are all local people who do this once a week in a state of possession: each one is possessed regularly by the same god. So you go up to the particular god you want to have a word with—like a confessional without a box—and just speak for as long as you want. The interesting thing is that there are these local people, who have become sort of specialized in it, who are in a state of pure possession; and it's very extraordinary, because they clearly have absolutely no clue as to what's going on; it's totally effaced from their memory. They are all smoking cigars (which is a great characteristic of these particular gods—they all like cigars); so men and women are all puffing away, and talking both normally and yet with certain bizarre characteristics that belong to the god—breaking out with strange sounds. So you ask advice, and the person will tell you what to do. I went and talked to a lady who was possessed, not by a god but by a saint—a man of the parish who died 20 or 30 years ago and became a saint, and returns and inhabits this lady. We had a nice little chat; she was very interested in the coat I was wearing and said: "Es impermeable?" So we were having this chat, and she blessed me and blew smoke all over me, and because it was in Portuguese I couldn't get very far, but something suddenly struck me as I looked

around at the other people who were having long conversations. I suddenly realized that the fact that one knew that the person was possessed—and so whatever else there was in the eyes looking at you, in a sense quite normally, they couldn't contain subjective judgment—gave you such a freedom! Obviously the Catholic church provides the same freedom by hiding the face of the person you are confessing to. But here you could look the person straight in the eyes, and because you knew that although you would see this little lady, who was maybe your neighbor, in the street the next day, *she*—her subjectivity—was *not* looking at you through those eyes; she had become in that sense a mask, and it freed you to say absolutely anything. I felt if I had been able to speak Portuguese, I could have told her anything at all, just like that.

The moment the mask absolves you in that way, the fact that it gives you something to hide behind makes it unnecessary for you to hide. That is the fundamental paradox that exists in all acting: that because you are in safety, you can go into danger. It is very strange, but all theater is based on that. Because there is a greater security, you can take greater risks; and because here it is *not* you, and therefore everything about you is hidden, you can let yourself appear. And that is what the mask is doing: the thing you are most afraid of losing, you lose right away—your ordinary defenses, your ordinary expressions, your ordinary face that you hide behind; and now you hide a hundred percent, because you know that the person looking at you doesn't think it is *you*, and on account of that you can come right out of your shell. We are so imprisoned, also, in such a narrow repertory that even if part of us wanted to, we actually *can't* open our eyes or furrow our brows or move our mouths and cheeks beyond certain limits. And suddenly we are given the capacity to do it: we open our eyes wider and raise our eyebrows higher than we ever have before.

P.: *We have talked about masks as being liberating, but how about the kind we do wear all the time unawares, which are certainly enslaving?*

P.B.: Oh, yes! And I think that the use of artists' masks is enslaving for the same reason. But there is the other sort of mask, where you go deliberately *not* towards a liberation; on the contrary, you take some characteristic that you are not very proud of and have it brought out in its most monstrous form. In *The Conference of the Birds* we have two villains, two thieves, who wear animal-like masks that are very scary. It is the lower nature that comes out. In that sense, there have been contemporary masks that are quite interesting. Joe Chaikin did a play called *Motel*, about two people making love in a motel, who wore masks like caricature heads out of the New Yorker, with unchangeable, fixed expressions. No matter what they were doing, the expression remained the same. The woman was a terrible blonde, with a great idiotic face, and the man a sort of salesman type with a goamy expression. These are perhaps the most successful of the contemporary masks; they come out of something contemporary art is qualified to talk about!



4

P.: What about the necessity of masks? The traditional mask is the face of a real man; but we don't have that, so we have to wear some kind of false face—we can't do otherwise. Is there such a thing as being unmasked?

P.B.: I don't think that with human beings you take masks off; I think they dissolve through growth, which is a very different thing. There is a lot of talk about stripping off masks, but in fact it is either a very dangerous process or one that doesn't work at all. I think they can thin out and disappear with a process of growth. And I would say that the more evolved a person is, the less easy it is to imitate that person in the caricature sense of the word. If you compare someone whose *personality* is evolved, like Churchill, it is God's gift to the caricaturists and cartoonists, whereas with the person whose inner life has evolved, I think it is very hard to do a drawing-room imitation.

P. Yes, because they are not fixed.

P.B.: So that in that sense, one could say, when one talks about our masks, what one really means is our rigidities. Somebody who has got just two expressions is someone whose natural capacity for being all the time in motion has become sclerosed, rigidified. Even someone who has twenty or even a thousand expressions—that is still not a lot, compared with the life force; it is still limited.

P.: What about the maskmaker? It seems important, what is invested in the creation of the form. There is a link that exists between the maker and the wearer.

P.B.: These two actions traditionally are considered actions. There is something that is understood as demanding respect in both operations. There are little rituals that are performed before putting on a mask or beginning to carve one, different things like sprinkling water or touching the ground, that show that it is more than a simple artisanal process. But in Western theater, I think it is a terrible thing almost always, the use of masks designed by painters and artists; because what do modern designers actually imagine that they are working *from*? They are making a face—but from what? That is a question that is by-passed. From what, and with what, are they making a face? It is not surprising that the result is neither flesh nor fowl, unless a person can stay very clearly in front of that question.

* * *

[Pictures: ATELIER PATRIX, Paris]

1. *Peter Brook directing La Cerisaie (The Cherry Orchard) with Nathalie Nell, Michael Piccoli, Anne Consigny.*
2. *The Conference of the Birds with Bruce Myers*
3. *The Conference of the Birds with Bruce Myers and Malick Bowen*
4. *The Conference of the Birds with Robert Lloyd, Malick Bowen, Bruce Myers*

The Concepts of *Anukarana*, *Anukirtana* and *Anudarshana* in Abhinavagupta's Theory of Aesthetics

R. K. Shringy

Introduction

This article aims at presenting the significance of three important concepts of *anukarana*, *anukirtana* and *anudarshana* in the context of Abhinavagupta's theory of aesthetics as developed in his interpretation of *natya*, as described by Bharata in the *Natyashastra*. These three concepts, along with their related ideas, constitute a key to the understanding of Bharata's conception of art as understood and developed by Abhinavagupta.

Though, quite apparently, Bharata's main concern is *natya* and not art as understood from the point of view of some Western philosophers, his conception of *natya* is so comprehensive and broad-based that it would be nothing short of a crime to reduce its connotation to drama or dramatic art as it is understood today. Thus, it becomes necessary to deal with the concept of *natya* in expounding which Abhinavagupta presses into service the other three concepts. However, a study of the text reveals that these concepts are essentially related to two other concepts that are equally important in this context, namely *anuvyavasaya* and *anubhavana*. Thus, it is proposed in this paper to deal with all these concepts in the general perspective of *natya*. Incidentally, comparative references to analogous concepts in Western aesthetics may be made in order to make the exposition of the subject more intelligible, since it seems that Abhinavagupta comprehends aesthetics in the form of *natya*.

Bharata's Statement

(a) Definition of *natya*

In keeping with the general ancient Indian tradition of scholarship, what Bharata gives us by way of definition of *natya* is not actually a definition, for this is hardly attempted by him, but the *lakshana-s*, the characteristic features of *natya*. He describes the nature, the function and the aim or the objectives of *natya* at great length in about 18 verses (I. 106-124). In a way this description is of great value since it sheds light on the various fundamental issues embracing his total concept. These are the more important aspects of the science of aesthetics as it is understood in our times and it is interesting to find how Bharata conceives *natya* in these terms, and how they are interpreted by Abhinavagupta who reflects upon the nature of aesthetic experience analytically and arrives at a definition that strikes one as a synthesis of the concepts of modern aesthetics.

As a basic concept, Bharata defines *natya* as *Trailikasya bhavanukirtanam* (I-107).¹ This may be freely translated as, "the expression of existence as conditioned by different times and climes". What should be noted, at the very outset, about this notion is that *natya* is the name that signifies expression of existence, as a whole, and thereby implies the intuition or the non-reflective perception of the whole in a particular form, as conditioned by time and space. Thus, fundamentally, even according to Bharata, aesthetic experience is basically intuitive in nature, and may clearly be distinguished from the order of direct and indirect perception i.e. from sensation, on the one hand, and intellectual

knowledge, on the other. Another significant implication of this notion is that aesthetic experience, by its very nature, seeks expression, and cannot, therefore, be isolated from aesthetic, or what may, for the purposes of clarity, be called artistic activity (*natya-karma*). Thus, expression signifies "the spontaneous response of aesthetic experience", while aesthetic experience may be distinguished, on the one hand, from the mystic experience, in so far as it signifies the intuition of the universal in a particular form, and from the sensual in so far as it transcends the limitations of the particular (in terms of time and space). However, the prefix *anu* in the term *anubhavanam* does imply a sequence of the two events viz. *bhavanam* (experiencing) and *anubhavanam* (expression), the former being essentially involved in the latter. Obviously, *natya*, as propounded by Bharata, is directly concerned with expression rather than with mere experience; and that is why he defines *natya* explicitly as expression. Thus, according to Bharata, *natya* signifies "the spontaneous response of the intuitive perception to the universal in a particular form". In other words, it is this response or expression that essentially characterises aesthetic experience. Hence the sequence of the two events referred to earlier is only apparent or functional and not real or final.

(b) The purpose and the function of *natya*

Describing the origin of *Natya-veda* or *Natyashastra* (the science of aesthetics), Bharata projects *natya* as *kridaniyakam*, an aural and visual plaything that amuses as well as instructs all alike without any distinction of caste or creed (I.11-12).² Then, while resolving to construct *Natya-veda*, he declares that this science, with its theory and practice, would satisfy moral, economic, intellectual and aesthetic values and function as a guide to every sort of human activity (I.14-15).³ When this is read in conjunction with N.S. I.106, where Bharata declares that he has produced the *Natya-veda* as a critique of action as motivated by will (*karmabhavanvayapekshi*),⁴ he leaves us in no doubt that *natya*, being the expression of the universal in a particular form, reflects impartially (*shubhashubhavikalpaka*)⁵ the good and evil results flowing out of such action. It does not seek to teach or to preach what is good or evil and why it is so, a concept that is analogous to Dandin's doctrine of poetics which declares that poetry is a mirror of existence.

This is the theory, in its rudiments, which was inherited by Abhinavagupta from Bharata. It will be quite interesting to find out how he expounds and develops it into a complete theory of aesthetics and in what terms he interprets the viewpoint of Bharata.

Abhinavagupta's Contribution

Abhinavagupta's contribution lies in his interpretation of the basic concept of *natya*. He asserts, and not without adequate justification, that *anukirtana* does not mean *anukarana* (i.e. imitation), even though Bharata has used this word as well. So he proceeds to expound the concept of *anukirtana*, and, in the process, reveals the entire psychological phenomenon in the enjoyment of a dramatic performance and concludes that *anukirtana* is, in fact, a psychological process of a very specific character *anu-vyavasaya visheshah*. Thus, he establishes that aesthetic experience is essentially a psychological activity which is categorically different from intellectual or physical activity.

(a) The nature and the object of *natya*

Bharata, as already stated, basically conceives *natya* as *anu-bhavanam*, which he further clarifies as *bhavanu-kirtana*; and it has already been rendered as "the expression of the existential mode of being". Abhinavagupta explains that *anu-kirtana* is a specific psychological process, not a mere reproduction or imitation (*anukarana*).⁶ It is worth noting that Bharata uses the term *anukarana* almost in the sense of imitation in one or two places viz. *lokavrttanukaranam natyam* (I. 112)⁷ i.e. "*natya* is the reproduction of people's behaviour". However Abhinavagupta is quick to refer to this usage, which he explains on a linguistic basis. So it is obvious that his main stress is on *anukirtanam*, a concept which he elucidates in detail and at great length. To begin with he makes an epistemological investigation into the nature of aesthetic cognition, and posits the view that in the execution of the artistic motif in the *natya-karma*, the actors do not in any way reproduce the behaviour of the characters they are supposed to imitate. This is due to the following considerations:⁸

- (i) Essentially, they do not have the same mind;
- (ii) They are not even similar in appearance like twins;
- (iii) If an actor is portraying the character of Rama, for example, he does not appear as Rama due to an erroneous perception (the way silver is perceived in an oyster-shell due to an illusion arising out of memory);
- (iv) Nor is it a case of false identification (as is the case when a snake is seen in a rope) which may be invalidated subsequently;
- (v) It is not a metaphorical or analogical perception (which is what happens when the face of the beloved appears to be a lotus or the moon to the lover);
- (vi) It is also not a copy (as is the case in a portrait or photograph);
- (vii) It is not even a case of imitation (the way a disciple learns, by reproducing the same tune produced by the teacher);
- (viii) Magic is certainly not involved here (like something being instantly created out of nothing);
- (ix) It is definitely not a case of hypnotism or mesmerism (cf. Abhinavagupta on N.S. I. 107).

It is thus quite clear that the aesthetic perception of Rama as represented by an actor, who is historically known to be different from Rama, is not obtained through any of these possible modes. Therefore, Abhinavagupta concludes that since none of these modes of cognition possibly secure the interest and aesthetic participation of the spectator, aesthetic cognition is categorically different from and independent of all these ordinary means and modes of knowledge. Having arrived at this conclusion, he proceeds to trace the extraordinary process through which aesthetic cognition is obtained:

In the example of Rama, the spectators, as well as the actors on the stage, are aware of the historical Rama, and, therefore, they are conditioned by the particular, that is the historical character. And yet, as Abhinavagupta explains, owing to the artistic ability of the actors to enact, in all probability, the deeds of Rama etc. (*sambhavayamana-rtha-kriyasamarthya*), the particularity of Rama is dissolved in the universal obtained through similarity of characteristic behaviour (*salakshanya*). The universal indicated here pertains not to particular persons, namely, the historical Rama and the actor appearing as Rama, but to the end-

results which follow from the events associated with the former and demonstrated by the latter. Thus, *anubhavanam* properly implies the expressive demonstration of *bhava-s* (states of being in relation to conditions of existence). In simple words, according to Abhinavagupta, aesthetic perception does not take place through the normal means of valid knowledge; it takes place through a psychological process of universalisation in which the presented particulars lose their local or personal colour and, through the artistic ability of the actors, the end-result, that is the inherent moral, is realised by dint of similarity of characteristic behaviour.

Abhinavagupta further points out that even though this process of universalisation is obtained in poetry as well, here in *natya* it is realised directly, through sense perception, and is, therefore, immediately and deeply effective. Also, the spectator, expecting to undergo an extraordinary experience (which is categorically different from the usual sort of pleasure and pain of everyday experience) attends to the performance (that is accompanied by song and dance) with an unoccupied and a free mind. In other words, he is in a receptive mood, ready to participate in the aesthetic experience, which is completed in a triangle involving the poet, the actor and spectator.

Abhinavagupta concludes, after a few similar statements of psychological analysis, that *anukirtana* is a specific cognitive or psychological process and is another name for *natya*,⁹ the one already mentioned being *anubhavanam*. When a description of the events associated with Rama is transformed into a dramatic performance, it becomes *anukirtana*: it not only implies the active and sympathetic participation of the spectators, but also presupposes the creative contemplation of the poet. That is why he insists that *anukirtana* is not *anukarana* (imitation).

Imitation, he says, means similar activity. The question is: similar to whom or to what? It cannot be similar to Rama because Rama himself is not the object of imitation. Perhaps Rama's mental make-up, his attitudes and temperament may be the object of imitation. No, not even that, since the actor is incapable of ever harbouring the very same feelings and attitudes. It is obvious that nothing, in fact, is imitated. The actors represent Rama, etc. not through actions similar to those of Rama but through actions of the same class: the feelings of happiness, sorrow, jealousy, courage are represented by the responses (*anu-bhava-s*) or reactions that are common to the majority of human beings. So the 'universal inherent in the particular' links the actors to the audience and provides the bridge for communication. Thus, it is noteworthy that Abhinavagupta completely rejects imitation as a possible explanation for artistic activity.

As a matter of fact, Abhinavagupta's fundamental concept of *natya* influences his entire interpretation or, rather, his interpretation leads to the following definition of *natya*. तेनानुभवायान् विशेषविषयीकार्यं नाट्यम् । i.e. *natya* is the object of aesthetic experience; in other words, *natya* is that which is worthy of being expressed or that which finds expression through the triangular psychological process of aesthetic expression, artistic activity and aesthetic enjoyment. This elucidates the nature of *natya*.

(b) The purpose of *natya*

No human activity is aimless. Therefore it is natural to enquire into the

aim, the purpose and the function of art as well. Here Abhinavagupta elaborates Bharata's view explained under the concept of *anudarshana*. He explains that *natya* points to the importance and role of the four fundamental values (*purushartha*-s) of human life through the direct perception of the results stemming from the aesthetic presentation of illustrious characters or their notable deeds as contrasted with the ignoble deeds of the ignorant and the wicked. However, the instruction thus imparted by *natya* is different from the regular modes of *vidhi* and *nishedha* i.e. injunction and prohibition in so far as it directly appeals to the heart and leaves the individual free to draw his own lessons from this experience.

When Bharata's concept of *natya* is viewed in the light of Abhinavagupta's interpretation, *natya* seems to have three dimensions symbolised by three different concepts: *anukarana* (imitation), *anukirtana* (creative contemplation) and *anudarshana* (perceptive aesthetic enjoyment). These are respectively represented by the actors who play the different roles and execute the plot conceived by the poet; by the poet or the writer who creates, in his artistic contemplation, the plot of the drama; and the spectators who consciously participate in the performance and reach out to the joy of the poet's creation through the interpretation of the dramatic action.

Critical Appraisal

It would be obvious from the above discussion that Abhinavagupta has spared no pains to prove that *anukirtana* does not mean *anukarana* (imitation). It can, therefore, be safely assumed that such a view must have prevailed widely during and before his time and he found it necessary to refute this attitude with all the power at his command. The theory of art as imitation was also propounded (in its various shades) by many Western thinkers. Plato, for example, held that art is three steps removed from Truth and primarily so because he recognised art merely as imitation: he could not accord the same respect to art as to philosophy. Obviously, Abhinavagupta's comprehension of *natya* as the "expressible", the perception of the universal as expressed through the particular steers clear of these difficulties. His concept of *anukirtana*, leading to the conclusion that *natya* is a psychological process, is akin to Croce's theory of aesthetics where he emphatically asserts that aesthetic experience or expression is primarily theoretical. However, whereas Croce distinguishes aesthetic value as categorically different, independent and *separate* from intellectual, moral and sensual or economic values, Abhinavagupta, while considering *natya* as different and independent of the intellectual (i.e. logical or scientific), moral and economic disciplines, does not consider it as *separate* or alien to these pursuits. He considers them all as complementary. This 'synthesis' enables Abhinavagupta to overcome many of the minor problems confronted by Western aestheticians, such as the connotation and the relation of the form and content of art, the number and classification of the fine arts and the aim or the object of art. In fact, a comparative study of these problems deserves a more comprehensive enquiry.

The concept of *anudarshana* is also unique. Though it seeks to combine amusement with instruction, it can hardly be said to be pedagogic: in this concept, instruction is not the aim or the objective of art; it is rather incidental to *natya* i.e. expression. Here art is not employed as a means to an exterior end; but what is sought to be realised through art is the unity of aesthetic, intellectual, moral and economic values.

Conclusion

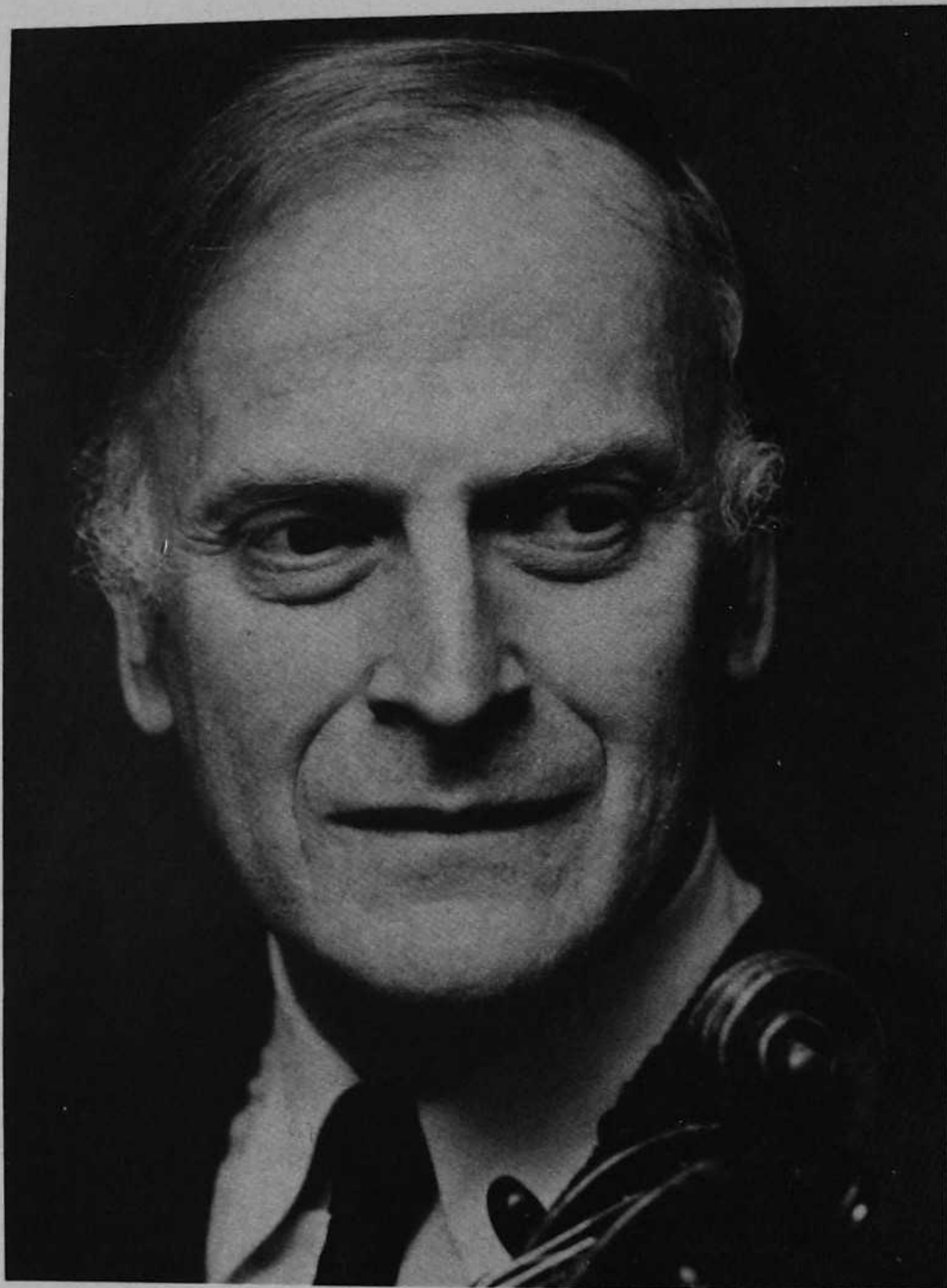
This discussion of Abhinavagupta's views, as based on Bharata's doctrine, leads to the conclusion that, 'aesthetic experience as conceived in terms of *natya*, being essentially a psychological process, involves not only the creator but also the executor and the enjoyer of the art, namely the artist, the performers and the audience. Furthermore, aesthetic enjoyment is categorically different from and independent of intellectual, moral, and sensual values, and yet it is capable of affording a glimpse of transcendental joy, technically called *Brahmananda-sahodara*.'

It may, however, be observed that Abhinavagupta inherited the basic ideas of his theory from Bharata, which he developed into a total system.

* * *

References :

1. त्रैलोक्यस्यास्य सर्वस्य नाट्यं भावानुकीर्तनम् । N. S., I.107.
2. क्रीडनीयकमिच्छामो दृश्यं श्रव्यं च यद्भवेत् । N. S., I.11.
3. धर्म्यमर्थ्यं यशस्यं च सोपदेशं ससंप्रहम् ।
भविष्यतश्च लोकस्य सर्वकर्मानुदर्शकम् ।
सर्वशास्त्रार्थसम्पन्नं सर्वशिल्पप्रदर्शकम् ।
नाट्याख्यं पञ्चमं वेदं सेतिहासं करोम्यहम् । N. S., I.14-15.
4. कर्मभावान्वयापेक्षो नाट्यवेदो मया कृतः ! N. S., I.106.
5. शुभाशुभविकल्पकः ।
6. तस्मादनुव्यवसायात्मकं कीर्तनं रूपितविकल्पसंवेदनं नाट्यम् । तद्वेदनवेद्यत्वात् ।
न त्वनुकरणरूपम् । Abhinavagupta on N. S., I.106.
7. लोकवृत्तानुकरणं नाट्यमेतन्मया कृतम् । N. S., I.113.
8. Cf. Abhinavagupta on N. S., I.106-107.
9. See Footnote 6.



Interview with Yehudi Menuhin

[We publish here excerpts from an interview with Mr. Yehudi Menuhin in the Taj Intercontinental Hotel on September 26, 1982.

—Editor]

Y.M.: I would like to express my pleasure, my deep, deep joy in being back in India. My wife and I, as you know, have for thirty years been very, very attached to this country—ever since we first came here. It has left a very deep impression on me, not least through its music and through those who represent its culture: Dr. Menon, who knew us when we were all young, many years ago and introduced us, and me particularly, to the beauty—and it is more than beauty, it is an inspiration, it is an extraordinary expression of human aspirations—of Indian music and dance. He came with us to Kashmir the first time and all round India (Spring 1952). So that this attachment has grown despite the fact that it has been some 10 to 12 years since my wife and I were here. We have kept up the contact, especially with the musicians who come to the west. And so, coming back was something like a reliving of a period which has remained in our lives as a unique and illuminated one. It was my first encounter with this civilization and it started a whole train of feelings and thoughts. It stimulated the imagination, the intellect and has remained a highlight in our memories, as, indeed, will this present, too short visit, which is very short because it was fitted in at the last moment to a trip to India and China by my two schools. They had to be back at the beginning of term. In fact, the term of the school has already been postponed by some ten days in order to accommodate this.

And, of course, I wanted to be part of the picture and took this advantage. My term, even though it is not a school term, is a constant one. And as soon as I get back, I have duties and, therefore, we are leaving for London tomorrow.

Of the school, there only remains one visible and one invisible member. Visible is, of course, Paul Coker, with whom you are by now well acquainted. A wonderful musician, young man and colleague now. And the other is Jagdish Mistry, one of your own violinists, who has been at the school, who is extremely talented, an extraordinarily warm and ecstatic personality. I think the ecstatic aspect of life is a peculiarly Indian one. I don't think any other country—how shall I say—lives or would like to live as much or knows as much about that aspect of life as India. It may not always be wise but it is inspiring. And it is particularly striking coming from China where wisdom is the strongest qualification for life; where the greatest aspiration is to wisdom. And where the quality of ecstasy is strangely remote. So the contrasts between these two very great countries is extremely striking.

Q : *Could you elaborate on your International School? Will a student who passes from your school require to do further advanced study at an institute say like the Juilliard or the Curtis Centre? Will your student, if he has the talent, be a full-fledged concert musician when he leaves your school?*

Y.M.: Your question sounds strangely bureaucratic to our ears!. There is no question of requirement from beginning to end. There is total devotion and seriousness and gaiety all through the years they are at the school. Two

students have gone recently on scholarships to Cambridge University. That's just an example. The universities are becoming more and more important musically, not necessarily for the forms as much as for the general understanding—musicology, the relationship of music to anthropology and to sociology and God knows what else. And others continue—special studies at one or two or three of the music schools in London or the Juilliard or the Curtis or go to special teachers in other parts of the world. And others come out ready for a working career whether it is performance or chamber music or teaching. And still others are open-minded, alert to every situation without having to have formal tuition. It is something which begins quite early in the school, in that we have a large number of teachers, and it is not exclusive, that is, even though one teacher may be particularly responsible for a particular pupil, that pupil is exposed to all the other teachers and all the music that goes on. My feeling has always been that I want far from clarifying the issues to students, I want to confuse them. Because I think the more and the earlier they are confused, the sooner they develop their own approach, their good sense in choosing what is appropriate and rejecting what isn't appropriate! We have an extraordinary atmosphere in the school. The world is suffering largely from frontiers of every kind—man-made mostly, and then quarrels about lines of demarcation. *That* does not exist in the school, where there are no barriers or secrets, and the students give one another a great deal by working together, helping each other, criticizing each other.

Q : *Experimentation in different forms. Electronic music—how does it affect creativity? Can there be a synthesis between mechanised music and creative music?*

Y.M. : You know it is impossible to predict. All I can say is that I welcome every serious exploration of new territory. This territory has come about in our age simply because we have had gradually to recognise the matter of degree. In the past we had neat little compartments for good and bad. We had neat little compartments for music and noise that could be separated. We had neat separation of most things and we could lead our lives very securely in the knowledge that we were good and perfect and right. Now that has been totally destroyed. To a great extent, I am not sorry for that. Naturally, it is a pity to give up one's exclusive sense of perfection of one's own behaviour! But I think it's a healthy thing, really. And electronic music has come about simply because the means which have never been there before—of creating sound as a result of the analysis of sound by electronic means—is for the first time there. Human beings are curious little monkeys. They can't be prevented from experimenting with every kind of thing. It's a good thing and it's a bad thing. But to the extent that it's not murderous—which it can be simply by sheer volume of sound in discothèques—to that extent it's useful. Now, I feel that with all the means at our disposal—like everything else today—we have the means of doing things more terrible than ever before, also of doing more good than ever before. But we have as yet no grammar. We have a language with 10 million words, possible words, as in electronic music; but we do not as yet seem to have the inspiration, with the possible

exception of a few composers such as Stockhausen, nor a real grammar to deal with a vocabulary as huge as that. It reminds me of the old joke about the New York telephone book. Someone said, "What a list of characters! But the plot is rather thin." It is a little bit the same with all the means at our disposal. Our morality, our sense of morality was geared (to the extent that it worked at all) to a few basic convictions. Those convictions have been swamped by a huge number of others. The idea about 'Thou shalt not kill', for instance, is an excellent thing. And I respect the Jain sect almost more than anybody in their pushing that to its logical conclusion. "Not a mosquito, not a fly, not an animal, let alone a human being." That's absolutely admirable and they live according to that. And people who live according to such a conviction are admirable because most of us pay lip-service to one thing or the other and don't abide by it. Now we not only gas millions of people but we use pesticides and we destroy whales and seals and forests and rivers. I think that compared with these ghastly things, experiments in electronic music are really very good.

Q : *You have composed film music also (The Magic Bow). Because of the recent vindication of film as a respectable form, would composing of film music by composers like you explore new vistas of creativity?*

Y.M. : I am not a composer! And I hope that *The Magic Bow* was not the last film seen in India. Film music can be quite wonderful. William Walton wrote for films of some of the great Shakespearean plays and some of the music was very good. I remember writing a fan letter to a Hungarian composer living in Hollywood after I saw a terrible film with excellent music. I thought, "That composer deserves a good letter." I made the mistake of being, as I sometimes am, overenthusiastic. I said if he ever thought of writing a concerto for a violin and orchestra, I'd be interested in playing it. About a year later I get a thick package with a score. I look at the score. It's excellently written. Every note was in its place, not a mistake; good sequence and so on and so forth. But, knowing Bartók, it was to me a poor, watered-down imitation of Bartók and I couldn't really accept it. So I was in a very bad situation, trying to write a diplomatic letter, which went more or less as follows: "Dear Friend, I've seen your concerto and it's an admirable work. I don't know whether it's absolutely suited to me but I know you will find a worthy interpreter." Well, about four months later, he sent me a letter saying, "You will be very happy to learn that Mr. Heifetz is playing the work", which he did. I think he played it once.

Q : *You were talking about experimentation in music. Now Indian music insists on purity. But isn't that a kind of stagnation to insist on purity? And, therefore, you do not progress. Any form has to live.*

Y.M. : When you speak like that, we are speaking in ready-made, theoretical, intellectual categories wherein we ascribe a positive value to progress and wherein we ascribe a negative value to stagnation. And where purity itself is being questioned. You see, we are dealing with words to which we ascribe arbitrary meanings which are not true of the organic flow of things.

There has been largely a very great stimulation by Indian music on western composers. That has already occurred. Because we found this idiom so incredibly 'pure', so incredibly refined and so equally demanding of the intellect and the emotion and so demanding of the great, the individual performer, who is constantly aware and, at the same time, capable of hypnotising. He carries you away, as I said the other evening after hearing the sitar player, it's absolutely extraordinary. It put you in the mood of forever, while, at the same time, counting for ever mathematically, dividing it into the minutest elements and fragments. It is an intellectual exercise which far surpasses at its best the average intellectual alertness, awareness of the western performer, who, by the very virtue of the fact that he is repeating something, playing something that has already been composed tends to fall into a kind of mechanical reading. Just as if you read a book, a great actor will infuse that text with an incredible immediacy, because he is really living it through, thinking it through, alert to it. But you give that book to 99 out of a 100, and they will just read it mechanically without any kind of thought to sense of quality. Indian music has the quality of such purity that they have rejected the tempered scale which would have allowed them the kind of 'progress' you speak of. Since the missionaries came with their tempered and ill-tempered and out-of-tune keyboard, they have done their best to make Indian music 'progress'. They brought about every kind of natural distortion—distortion of the perfection of rhythm, distortion of the perfection of pitch, distortion of everything in their attempt to impose religious hymns on the Indian people. The Indian music that they have 'harmonised' would be from some people's point of view 'progress' simply because they have added western harmony. But they have, in fact, violated Indian music and only in the hands of a very great composer like Bartók was, or in the course of a hundred years or more of exchanges will it be possible to evolve a style which may be able to draw on both but which would be organic in its unity. In the west, we are getting so bored with our tempered scale. There's an extraordinary man in England who will tune a harpsichord to the exact pitch which would satisfy even the exacting ears of an Indian musician, the exact pitch which is suitable to a particular piece. Now this is applicable particularly to pieces written in the 17th, 16th, and 15th centuries, before we adopted the tempered scale and pieces did not modulate and were in one key. The terrible thing about the piano (with all due respect) is that it always sounds out of tune unless it is tuned by some extraordinary people, of which I know about two.

It's interesting that in China they have rejected the chromatic scale for totally different reasons. Here, there is the matter of the purity of the fifth, which must remain pure in Indian music, whereas it is already corrupt in our music, but it has enabled us to have great orchestras and modulations and Strauss and Wagner and all the rest. Not a mean achievement at all; in fact, a very important achievement, because the so-called western music is now much more than that—it has become international music; it has been able to absorb and to inspire many other cultures. And I am looking forward to the day when India will, with her great talent, produce numbers of musicians, orchestras, chamber orchestras, chamber music

in order to become part of the international musical scene, at present represented only by Zubin Mehta, three boys from my school and a very good Indian composer in England, Naresh Sohal. But otherwise India should and deserves, with her talent, to have an equal representation of the classical Indian and the best teaching of the western schools and of different styles, ranging through the last centuries from all parts of the world, now including Japan and soon will include China too. Now the Chinese had a chromatic scale of twelve tones to the octave already 2,500 years ago because I myself was allowed to strike the bells of that period which were unearthed about five years ago. Wonderful bronze castings with incredible ornamentation of a perfection which is unbelievable. And we always say: How extraordinary in those days!—little realizing that it was more natural in those days to create a perfect bronze bell than it is now. Anyway that range of bells had twelve notes to the octave and were perfectly tuned. Not only that, their theory of music—of the Pythagorean comma—the end of the circular fifth—their theory was elaborated before Pythagoras. Only they rejected that! Chinese music, in the main, especially accepted music—not the wild, folk music of the Mongolians or those on the south-west border—Chinese music has always been pentatonic. And I think in their search for wisdom, as opposed to ecstasy, they wanted to eliminate anything that could possibly be irritating, dissonant. Unlike the Indians who adore dissonance, but in its pure state, because of the dissonance with the fifth is measured in degrees much smaller than our half-tones, the Chinese went the other way. They believed that wisdom is a state of absolute balance, equilibrium. That, therefore, you must avoid the extremes of passion, ecstasy, colour. And with the pentatonic scale you can't go wrong because you can play all the five notes without creating any dissonance. That's my theory anyway. While they adopted the pentatonic scale, Indians went the other way.

Q : *Twenty years from now, will you be a better violinist?*

Y.M. : Twenty years from now, if I am here at all, I don't believe I will be a better violinist. Unlikely. I mean people don't become better runners or better swimmers or better airplane pilots as they get older and older. No, I think it's a balance. As I learn more about it, I may keep a certain balance. But there is bound to be a time when I won't be able to play the violin. I hope there will be a time. Because otherwise I may die prematurely.

Q : *Playing the violin—if you reach a maestro level and lose dexterity—should you give up?*

Y.M. : Well, it certainly depends on what you can do, or you can't do. To what extent you can convey the meaning. To what extent you can't. Should, shouldn't are very dangerous categories, especially in India, where there is such a great deal of laissez-faire. Again, India is a land of contrasts. Great wealth and intolerable poverty, great allowing anyone to do what they like. A great many people who speak about 'should', 'shouldn't'!

Q : *You see western music and Indian music going their separate ways—really not blending.*

Y.M.: I don't see anything. I admire Indian music. I'm carried away by its sheer passion, intensity, colour, concentration, focus and purity, with two people, each one solo playing on their different instruments with the tanpura in the background providing the perfect . . . like in the camera . . . parallax. And focussing on the one point and the mind absolutely acute and alert. I love western music. Western music is by now an antiquated term because it involves as much Japan as most other countries. It has such an incredible variety of styles. It has brought different cultures together in the sense that it originated in Europe, where many of the cultures of Asia and Northern Europe and the Mediterranean had to live together and they had to speak and sing and shout together. And the only way was to give them a few laws, whereby they wouldn't all the time be intolerable. So some were assigned bass, others were assigned tenor, alto, soprano, and then the churches where this took place made laws of counterpoint so the voices didn't cross too often and they moved in exactly the same way. Consecutive fifths, for instance, were not tolerated. Because one of the fifths is always regarded as a fundamental, against which other things move, but not move in together. And thus the laws of counterpoint and harmony evolved in Europe in order to keep together a relatively small peninsula.

Q : *Indian classical music—do you prefer instrumental or vocal?*

Y.M.: You people really want categorical answers! I look upon the violin as a vocal instrument. So that should satisfy you.

Q : *Would you agree that today, in western classical music, among the younger generation of musicians there is a preponderance of excellent pianists at the top level but not of violinists. If so, why?*

Y.M.: I think piano playing was encouraged in the nineteenth century enormously. Every home had a piano. I don't say every but many, many homes had the piano. Because at that time the piano was what the gramophone and the radio and TV have become since. And piano playing was something that every well brought-up little girl had to do. The richer people may have kept a harp in the house as a decoration but that is as far as they went, handling strings with their bare fingers. Which a violinist, being a very basic manual labourer, has to do all the time. The piano is a much more refined instrument in that you can clean and polish the keyboard and it can be gleaming white and black.

Q : *What about the possibilities of improvisation in jazz?*

Y.M.: There have been some extraordinary meetings between great jazz drummers and the tabla players. That can be a most exciting event. And, of course, it is a meeting of two different worlds. Because the African drummer is totally different from the Indian drummer. The Indian drummer is a solitary figure; who contains in his mind all the different permutations, mathematical permutations of his *tala*. But the Africans have evolved great drummers. But in their natural state they are always a group of

drummers and they would choose a basic rhythm which may be 8 or 12 or 11 or so and they would assign the sub-divisions to each different player and one player will do, say if it is 11, he would do 1, 2, 3—1, 2, 3, 4—1, 2, 3, 4; 1, 2, 3—1, 2, 3, 4—1, 2, 3, 4 and another will do 1, 2, 3, 4, 5—1, 2, 3, 4, 5—1; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5—1, 2, 3, 4, 5—1. Any kind of combination and each one is concentrating on his own. And the total impression is an extraordinary, also hypnotic one. But each mind—there is no one mind above it all that can synthesize the whole thing like the Indian *tabla* player can. Unless in meeting with the Indians, they have also evolved such a player which very likely they have by now.

Q : *There was a lot of noise in Israel when Zubin Mehta played Wagner. What do you think about that?*

Y.M.: Well, Wagner does make a lot of noise. Israelis are, naturally, just like people everywhere, prejudiced, and people who have even a right to be prejudiced. And there are people who equate Nazism, Germany, Wagner—all in one piece. Wagner himself was a kind of person who lent credence to that stupid association.

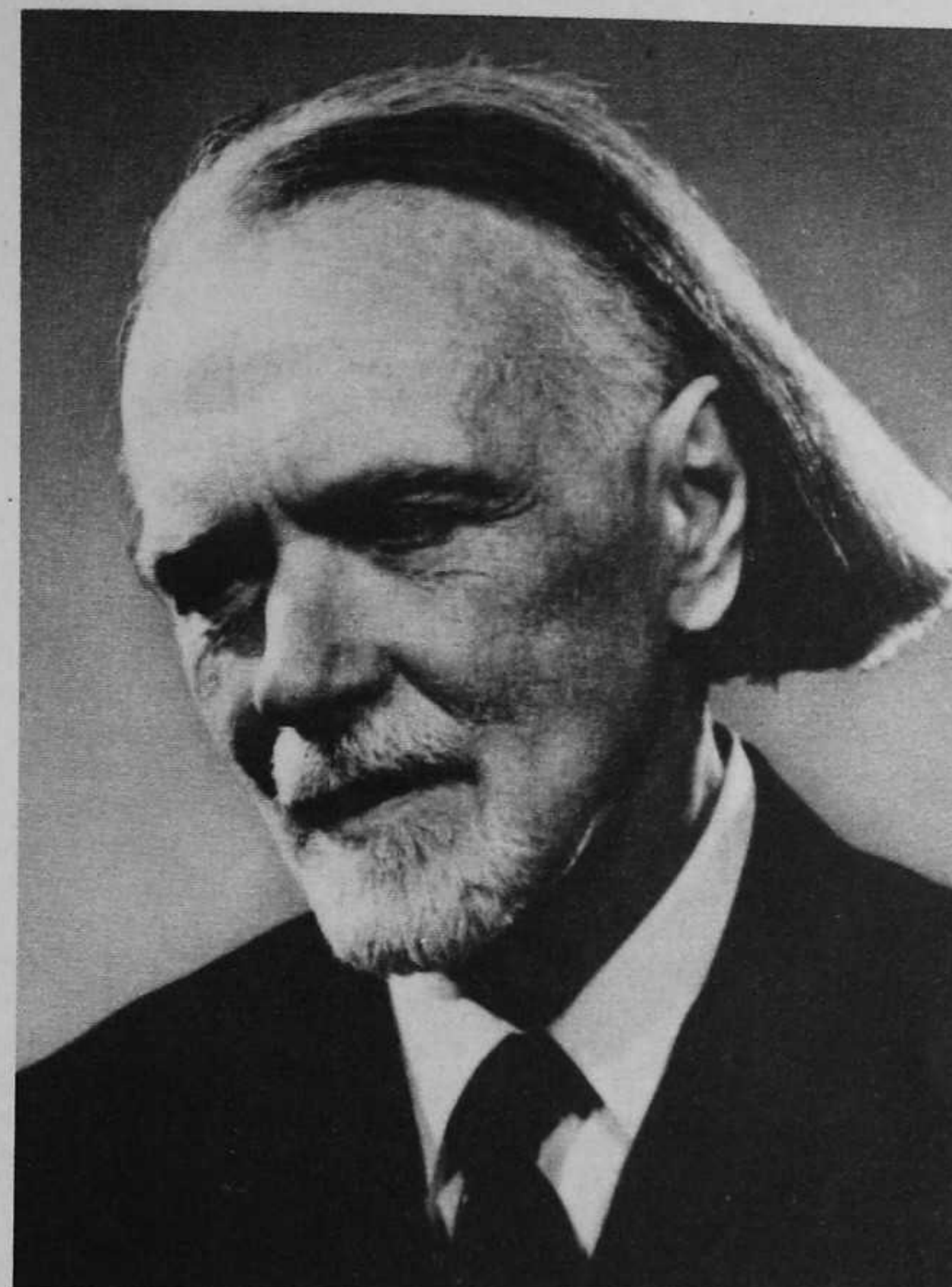
Q : *Of all the countries of the world why did you choose Britain to live in?*

Y.M.: That I could answer quite easily. Ever since childhood, when I first came to England, I loved the people. They gave me a sense of balance, stability. I noticed always that my father was at his best in England. He was always very volatile, but in England he suddenly became equable, rational and unflustered. That impressed me a great deal. Then, of course, I married Diana who's from London. I've loved England and wanted to settle there for a good many years. I've remained an American citizen because simply I am born that and I don't like to be unfaithful to a country I know very well and I owe a great deal to and admire in many ways. But there is a quality about England which—have you ever read anything by Hannah Arendt? I think she's remarkable. She made the point, speaking of Civil Disobedience, that it requires both parties. If the Germans or even the Japanese before the War—let alone the Russians—had been in charge of India, I wonder if Gandhi would have succeeded as he did. England has always welcomed musicians from all over the world. Even though she had a very great musical culture in the 16th, 17th, 18th centuries and some excellent composers in the late 19th and in the 20th, and now again a great new musical flowering, she never had an exclusive musical culture. She welcomed Handel and Haydn and all the soloists and singers and conductors, as she does now from all over the world. She is the most hospitable country for music and, what is more, has the most intense musical life. London has 6 or 7 great orchestras, 2 opera houses, 2 major ballet companies. I mean that there is no country that has a musical life to compare with that in England. And then, my recording contract was with EMI, though during the Depression in the United States in 1929, the Company sent all its artists to the sister company in England. Later, when the Depression receded, and they asked some of the artists back, I felt very happy with the English Company and didn't return. Despite the fact

that my life is one of endless travelling, in myself I stay put. And, as I was telling the Chinese the other day, that they have an extraordinary way of not going but staying put for 2,000 years and coming out ahead. They know the world goes round in endless circles and if you remain in one place eventually you will be ahead of everybody else.

Q : *What is the reason why modern day western composers have not come to the level of the great composers of the past?*

Y.M. : I don't know that they have not. There are quite a few who are very fine composers. No, I think you have to be open-minded about that.



In Memory of Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967)

Tibor Sárai

Exactly a hundred years ago (on the 16th of December, 1882) Zoltán Kodály was born in a small town, Kecskemét, about 70 miles from Budapest. He was the son of the local station-master. Hungary was at the time not an independent state but part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Hapsburg Imperial house ruled here in the person of Franz Joseph.

Kodály—in the course of his long life—was witness to several historical changes: the First World War, the collapse of the monarchy, Hungary's becoming independent, the bourgeois revolution of 1918, the proclamation of the Hungarian

Republic of Councils in 1919, following the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia. Then followed the 25-year counter-revolutionary era, leading to the German occupation of the country and Fascism, the Second World War, and Hungary's liberation from Fascist dictatorship. When Kodály died on March 6, 1967, he was mourned by the people of a country building a developed socialist society. And though these very stormy events—often of entirely antagonistic tendency—greatly defined the formation of Kodály's course of life and many-sided creative activity, his genius melted down every influence into the unique phenomenon that was his very complex and, at the same time, admirably homogeneous personality.

His creative activity comprises three main aspects: he was a composer, scientist and educator. These three aspects, in the case of Kodály, are not separated from one another but profoundly interdependent. Each presupposes the other two: one cannot be understood in itself divorced from the other two. In an age when specialization has become more and more predominant in the intellectual life of Europe and America, his oeuvre realizes the unity of science, art and education. This characteristic is a very important factor in the Kodály phenomenon.

It determined his studies as well. After concluding his secondary education, he came (in 1900) to Budapest and simultaneously joined the Academy of Music and the University's Faculty of Arts. He was awarded both degrees in 1905 and his Ph.D. in 1906. His studies, to become a composer, were directed by Professor Hans Koessler, who had also taught Béla Bartók. At the University, Kodály studied to become a teacher of Hungarian and German. The title of his dissertation, "The Verse Construction of the Hungarian Folksong", hints at the close connection between the musician and the scientist. This work caused an immediate sensation in the professional circles of literary historians and linguists. In the same year (1906), the performance of his first symphonic work *Summer Evening* was received very favourably by musicians. (On Toscanini's advice this work was revised in 1929-30 and in today's concert repertoire it is performed in this latter form.)

Another important event took place during these two years. Influenced by the 1905 revolution in Russia, Kodály started his activity as collector of folksongs of epoch-making significance. His great friend Béla Bartók joined him in this work in 1906.

What was the situation like in Hungary during these years? The ecstasy generated by the country-wide celebrations of the millennium, at the end of the nineteenth century, was over. (In 1896, large-scale celebrations commemorated the fact that Hungarians had occupied our present country just one thousand years earlier). The mood of rapture was followed by disappointment, caused, first of all, by the dependence of the country, social tensions and the unsolved problems of the different nationalities then living in Hungary. These circumstances prepared the ground for the emergence of a young, radical, intellectual group, demanding revolutionary changes. Its leading figure was the great poet Endre Ady (1877-1919) who revolutionised Hungarian poetry. He was the initiator and leader of the literary battle which paved the way for the political revolutions of 1918-19. The fact that with Ady the revolutionary spirit was manifest both in artistic

expression and the demands for social changes had a decisive impact on Bartók and Kodály, who naturally represented the musicians of this radical movement.

Like in the other areas of culture, Hungarian music life of the period reflected the political and social conditions of the time. First of all, in the duality—while it was autochthonous, music culture (including Hungarian composition to a great extent) was under distressing German influence, mostly in the spirit of Wagnerian epigonism. Characteristically, the professor of composition of Kodály and Bartók at the Budapest Academy of Music, the otherwise excellent Koessler, was also German. The "Hungarian" character in the minds and the music "absorption" of the ruling classes and of the medium layers as well as the corrupted, degenerate, wild-growth of the vulgar, Hungarian "artificial" song. This was in keeping with the declassé nature of moral and economic life, so characteristic of the Hungarian nobility and gentry. Kodály not only discerned this dismal situation but set down what had to be done: (1) the basic Hungarian stratum of our music had to be found and made a public treasure as a mother-tongue; (2) Hungarian composition could be raised to international rank based on these and great European traditions as well as the most progressive results of musical development. To achieve this, he had to be in one person a scientist (to find and systematize the basic layer of our music), an educator (to make this public treasure a mother-tongue) and a composer (to raise Hungarian composition to international rank). Kodály deliberately undertook this task and remained true to these aims to his dying day.

As a result of his perseverance, the work of collecting folksongs continued with much self-denial, demanding great scientific and musical knowledge. He founded—with Bartók who joined him later on—the basic stratum of Hungarian music in the folksong-treasure of the peasantry, then dispossessed and disdained. An unknown, entirely new world, opened up to them in a social, scientific and, of course, aesthetic sense. It has been proved that the peasantry—perhaps because it is bound to the soil and remains in isolation—can absorb aesthetic effects, change them according to its own image and retain them. Kodály and Bartók found pentatonic melodies of old style which—as was proved with the help of the science of comparative folkmusic—had a past of several thousand years.

Other melodies, on the other hand, are masterpieces of the high culture of a court or the centuries-old church and they have percolated down to the people and have been preserved by them. The traces of the music of all the peoples can be found in the peasant music culture that had any connection whatsoever with Hungarians. So Kodály and Bartók rightfully claimed that the folkmusic treasure discovered, collected and systematized by them was the preserver of the whole of Hungary's musical past, being the Hungarian music tradition itself.

Kodály, in his composer's orientation, too, sharply turned against the German-Austrian musical hegemony then prevalent in Hungary. (It meant practically cultural colonization.) From this point of view, his West-European trip (made in 1905-6) had a decisive influence. In Paris, he became acquainted with Debussy's typically French art, pointing to new ways and, on the other hand, reacting against German hegemony there. It is also interesting to note that the pentatonic

and modal scale structure, so characteristic of the most ancient layer of the Hungarian folksong just found, is also naturally—yet quite independent of it—present in Debussy's music as a new element. Kodály's series (consisting of 16 songs with piano accompaniment composed for popular texts) already showed this special "alloy", whose elements were found in the then recently discovered Hungarian folkmusic treasure. The aim that composition, built on the newly found Hungarian musical mother-tongue, should start towards international recognition, began to be realized.

The road proved to be rough from the very beginning. This series (containing 16 songs) had an entirely new, unusual tone for Hungarian ears. Kodály's great dream to return to the people the music received from them was based on naive assumptions. It was not the sons of the people tilling the soil who attended concerts. Radical young intellectuals accepted these works of Kodály's youth with enthusiasm but the majority of concert audiences did not know what to do with them. So they were loudly rejected. The conservative part of the intelligentsia—and they were the great majority—looked down upon folksong-collecting itself, did not accept the folksong-treasure just found as Hungarian (compared to their own world, dominated by gipsy-music). They branded our most beautiful folksongs as the unintelligible mumbling of beggars. It was said that folksong-collecting was only manipulation on the part of Kodály and Bartók: it enabled them to force down the throat of the simple concert audiences their own "half-baked concoctions". Unfortunately, this initial resistance of the conservatives (in Hungary) continued until after the Second World War, using milder or rougher means, and countered Kodály's activity and also that of Bartók. The situation was not much better abroad either, though Kodály's early chamber-music compositions (First String Quartet, Sonata for 'Cello and Piano Piano Pieces) were performed in the concert halls of Western Europe. In Paris, for example "pro-Kodály" and "anti-Kodály" groups were formed. The spreading abroad of his works was temporarily hindered by the First World War but he completed newer compositions (Duo for Violin and 'Cello; Solosonata for 'Cello; Second String Quartet; Serenade for String Trio; Seven Piano Pieces; Several Song Series). At the end of the first decade of this century and at the beginning of the twenties, Kodály compositions began to be heard in the traditional European concert halls, in America, and also in the Soviet Union. With the growing number of compositions and their performances, altercations increased and opinions regarding the works became more polarized—from bitter attacks to enchanted celebration.

Political events carried these disputes to the area of administrative measures. These decades witnessed a very significant event: in 1907, at the age of twenty-five, Kodály was appointed Professor of the Budapest Academy of Music, Faculty of Composition. With this, the third function of Kodály's oeuvre started: that of educator. He taught at the Academy of Music as Professor of Composition till 1940 and, during this period, he nurtured in the subsequent generations of Hungarian composers his individual, pedagogic method, which has since become legendary. With this activity he practically defined the face of Hungarian music life. Composers did not just graduate from his classes. With his

unusual insight he could tell which of his pupils would become real composers, which of them possessed other musical, eventually organizing abilities. From among the latter he chose excellent experts to organize and later direct Hungarian primary school music education, chorus life, folkmusic research, musicology, pedagogy.

In March 1919, the Hungarian Republic of Councils was proclaimed. With his radical intellectual circle, Kodály at last deemed the situation ripe enough to start—with state assistance—to realize his great plans. He sought to end the cultural backwardness of the country, including that of the life of music, and the German hegemony in music. He strove to return to the people the people's music—at a higher level. Consequently Kodály took part—and so did Bartók—in the work of the Music Directorate of the Republic of Councils and was Deputy Director of the Academy of Music. The Republic of Councils failed after 133 days and for the next twenty-five years an oppressive, counter-revolutionary system was in power. A humiliating disciplinary procedure was initiated against Kodály for his role during the period of the Republic of Councils. Anti-Kodályism became a state standpoint and, as a result, he was suspended for two years from his position as Professor of the Academy of Music. The composer did not fail to come out with his answer. In 1923, on the 50th anniversary of the unification of several towns into Budapest, Kodály composed the *Psalmus Hungaricus* (The Hungarian Psalm), setting to music the poem of a sixteenth-century poet. In this monumental creation (written for tenorsolo, mixed, and children's chorus and orchestra), he calls down a merciless curse, in Biblical language with prophetic anger, and, in the given situation in a symbolic way but unmistakably, on the counter-revolutionary system. He could not be touched, however, because a masterpiece had been born, bringing about a change in his course of life. At home he was at once acclaimed as the national poet of the Hungarian people. Abroad, with the *Psalmus Hungaricus*, he came to be regarded as one of the leading composers of Europe. The *Psalmus* was introduced in New York by Mangelberg; in the Milan Scala by Toscanini, in Amsterdam and London by Kodály himself. It was performed in many countries of the world.

After the *Psalmus Hungaricus*, the appearance of a new Kodály composition became an event in the musical world and leading performing artistes included his works in their programme. Works that won recognition abroad are: *Háry Janos*, Singspiel (1926) and the orchestra-suite extracted from the work; *Dances of Marosszék*, and *Dances of Galanta* (1930; 1933); *Spinning Room*, a one-act Singspiel (1924-1932); *Te Deum of Buda Castle*, written on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the liberation of Buda Castle from Turkish rule (1936); *Peacock Variations* (1938-39); *Concerto for Orchestra* (1939) and many others.

According to Bartók's definition, the original folksong can be used by the composer in three ways: (1) Leaving the folksong untouched, he places his work in a musical environment suitable to the folksong, i.e. he applies adequate accompaniment. (In this sphere, Kodály covered ground of a superior order with his two Singspiels, *Háry Janos* and *Spinning Room*. Here the music sung on the stage is exclusively the folksong left untouched; the development, that is the accompaniment, the music supporting the stage action, intermezzos, are supplied

by the orchestra with its independent material. In the case of *Háry Janos*, the famous orchestra-suite was composed of the latter elements; (2) He forms the folksong, according to the possibilities deriving from it, in a sovereign way. The most characteristic example here is the large-scale orchestral *Peacock Variations* composed on a folksong; but in the dance-fantasies for large orchestra *Dances of Marosszék* and *Dances of Galanta*, Kodály treats the folkmusic material quite freely; (3) a composition in which no folksong quotation figures in any form, and the whole of the composition derives from the basic spirit of folkmusic. For instance, *Te Deum of Buda Castle* or *Concerto for Orchestra*. It has to be underlined again that beside these novel solutions, Kodály remains true to great European music traditions in formation, structure and harmony-world, creating a unique atmosphere. In his case, musical European-ness spanned the period from the vocal culture of the sixteenth century through Bach to Debussy.

His activity as chorus-composer occupies a special place in Kodály's art. On the one hand, in artistic rank and quantity, this field of creation is without example in the music of the twentieth century and can be compared to the art of madrigal-composers of the sixteenth century; on the other hand, in this genre, his activity as composer and educator intertwined most. From this point of view it is characteristic that he started writing chorus works in 1925 with children's choruses. These were followed by the excellent series of male, women's and mixed chorus works.

In his work as educator, the masterly training of composers and branch-experts (meant for different points of music life) was just a basis, creating the possibility of raising the cultural level of people through music. The essence of Kodály's ideas of education was the recognition—proved to be true in practice since—that through its unique characteristics, music culture—attainable comparatively easily—opens the way to other areas of culture (literature, mathematics, foreign languages, etc.) and to humanist conduct in general. It contributes to social co-existence, acquaintance with and esteem for other peoples, etc. Musical education, claimed Kodály, cannot be started early enough. (As he once remarked in jest: "At least nine months before a baby is born"). Its main scene of application is the primary school system, its means the human voice, at the disposal of every child, independently of social situation. (There hardly exists such a democratic, effective force of education as polyphonic singing together.) Its material of music is the folksong with the function of mother-tongue, joined by the folksongs of other peoples. Later on, this forms the basis of acquaintance with the works of world literature. Initially, this pedagogic conception led Kodály, the composer, to create the first children's choruses; then a whole chorus literature which, beside the original pedagogic intention, resulted, at the same time, in a series of works of art.

Between the two World Wars, in certain intellectual circles, respect for Kodály grew. From the close of the thirties the area of the workers' movement expanded in increasing measure. Due to his international success, his great dream and plans—lacking official support—could not be realized. Their epoch-making folksong collection was sought to be arranged—but in vain—by Bartók right till 1940 and then by Kodály. (Their first edition could only be issued after the

liberation of Hungary—naturally under the scientific direction of Kodály). In vain was the great music-educational plan of serving the whole people elaborated. In that particular political era it could not be realized. Both Bartók and Kodály were attacked, especially by the Catholic Church which then wielded very great power. Their activity was branded as destructive, and detrimental to youth. With the spread of Fascism (at the beginning of the forties), the police banned the performance of certain of Kodály chorus-compositions, especially if workers' choruses wished to sing them.

The liberation of Hungary in the spring of 1945 basically changed the situation for Kodály and his oeuvre, especially its function. Kodály became the outstanding spiritual leader of the rebuilding of the country's destroyed cultural and scientific life and its democratic organisation. He was elected Member of Parliament, Chairman of the Art Council and the Academy of Sciences and the Association of Hungarian Musicians. Later the Hungarian National Committee of the International Music Council elected him Honorary President. The University of Budapest, then of Oxford, awarded him Honorary Doctorates. He was Chairman of the International Society for Music Education (ISME) and the International Folkmusic Council. The list could be continued at length. However, what he himself considered as the realization of his object in life was that his program of music education became a state program.

The possibilities of the realization of his plans of serving the country made this slim, slight man (getting on in years) an indefatigable intellectual giant, and an outstanding leader of Hungarian cultural life. With self-mockery, he called himself (in the period after 1945) an old pluralist for he was really present everywhere: from the Parliament through the Academy of Sciences, and the Academy of Music to the music schools of small villages, where he felt he could do something to raise the cultural level of the Hungarian people and thus contribute to a happier future for them. His last public appearance was at the opening of the music school of a small village on the Danube.

In countless concert halls of the world, in scientific and pedagogic institutes, not to mention the national and international Kodály societies, the centenary of Kodály's birth was remembered and commemorated. For me it is really a great joy and honour to draw attention to this genius in India, a country he always longed to visit but as it happened this wish could never be realized.



Dagar Saptak, Dhrupad Festival organised by Dhrupad Kendra of Ustad Allaiddin Khan Sangit Akademi, Bhopal, November 1-3, 1982.

Of the various traditions of *dhrupad*, the Dagar style is undoubtedly the most popular and significant. The genealogical chart of the Dagar *gharana* traces the tradition of their *Bani* right back to Swami Haridas.

All the living exponents of the tradition were present during the festival which opened with the premiere of a documentary film *DHRUPAD* produced by the Films Division of India and directed by Mani Kaul. The film captured the spirit of devotion inherent in this style of music. Zia Fariduddin Dagar rendered the vocal compositions and Zia Moiuddin Dagar interpreted *dhrupad* on the Rudra-Veena. The period of Raja Mansingh Tomar of Gwalior was strikingly projected through the visual images and the solemn sound of *dhrupad*.

An important part of the Festival was an interview of the Dagar Brothers conducted by two eminent musicologists (Thakur Jaidev Singh and Dr. Premlata Sharma), and Mani Kaul. The discussion with the seven Dagers defined the *Dagar Bani* in all its aspects. Nasir Aminuddin Dagar explained the significance of their elaborate *alap*. *Alap*, according to him, is *Ashta Pooja* of the God. It grows and blossoms note by note. The use of syllables Ri Ta Na etc. originated from *Anant Hari Om Antara Taarana Tarana Narayana Narayana* and they are meant to be uttered only in a particular sequence to make a *chhand* (a meaningful idiom). With the use of these syllables the artiste reveals various aspects of *gayaki*, namely, *meend*, *ghasit*, *gamaka*, *moorchhana* using the *graha-ansha-nyasa*. These are the ornaments used for *Ashta Pooja*. After a lively discussion the session ended with a rare experience when all the brothers sang a composition in unison.

The other sessions featured concerts by the Dagers. The youngest, Saiduddin Dagar, sang a *dhamar* in Ahir Bhairav followed by *dhrupad*-s in Gunakali and Jogiya. Zia Fariduddin Dagar, in spite of his ill-health, rendered a *dhamar* in Chandrakauns. Clear and precise *nom tom* formed the highlight of his concert.

Nasir Zahiruddin and Nasir Faiyazuddin elaborated a *dhrupad* in Kamboji, followed by a fast tempo Shankara in Sool *tala*, and a *dhrupad* in Sohni. Rahim Fahimuddin sang *dhrupad* and *dhamar* in Kedar, followed by two short *dhamar* compositions in Hameer and Desh. Zia Moiuddin played the Rudra-Veena on the last night, rendering a *dhrupad* in Yaman-Kalyan followed by *alap* in Panchamkosh. Nasir Aminuddin Dagar rendered, in his slow-moving style, a *dhrupad* in Lalita Gauri. It was followed by a popular *dhrupad* in Adana (*Beni Nirakhat Bhujanga*) in fast tempo, with the *layakari* typical of *dhrupad*. The last item of the festival was a pleasant surprise: a *Jugalbandi* by Nasir Aminuddin and Zia Moiuddin. They rendered Malkauns *alap* and *dhrupad*. It was a unique experience, listening to these concerts, for one became aware of the diversity and unity in the styles of these brothers.

The Pakhawaj accompaniment was provided by veterans like Gopal Das, Purushottam Das, Raja Chatrapati Singh and Shrikant Mishra.

A very attractive and informative souvenir was published during the festival. It traces in brief the history of the Dagar tradition, and includes contributions on their *guru-shishya parampara*. A detailed chart of the genealogy of the Dagar family is also included.

—V. R. D.

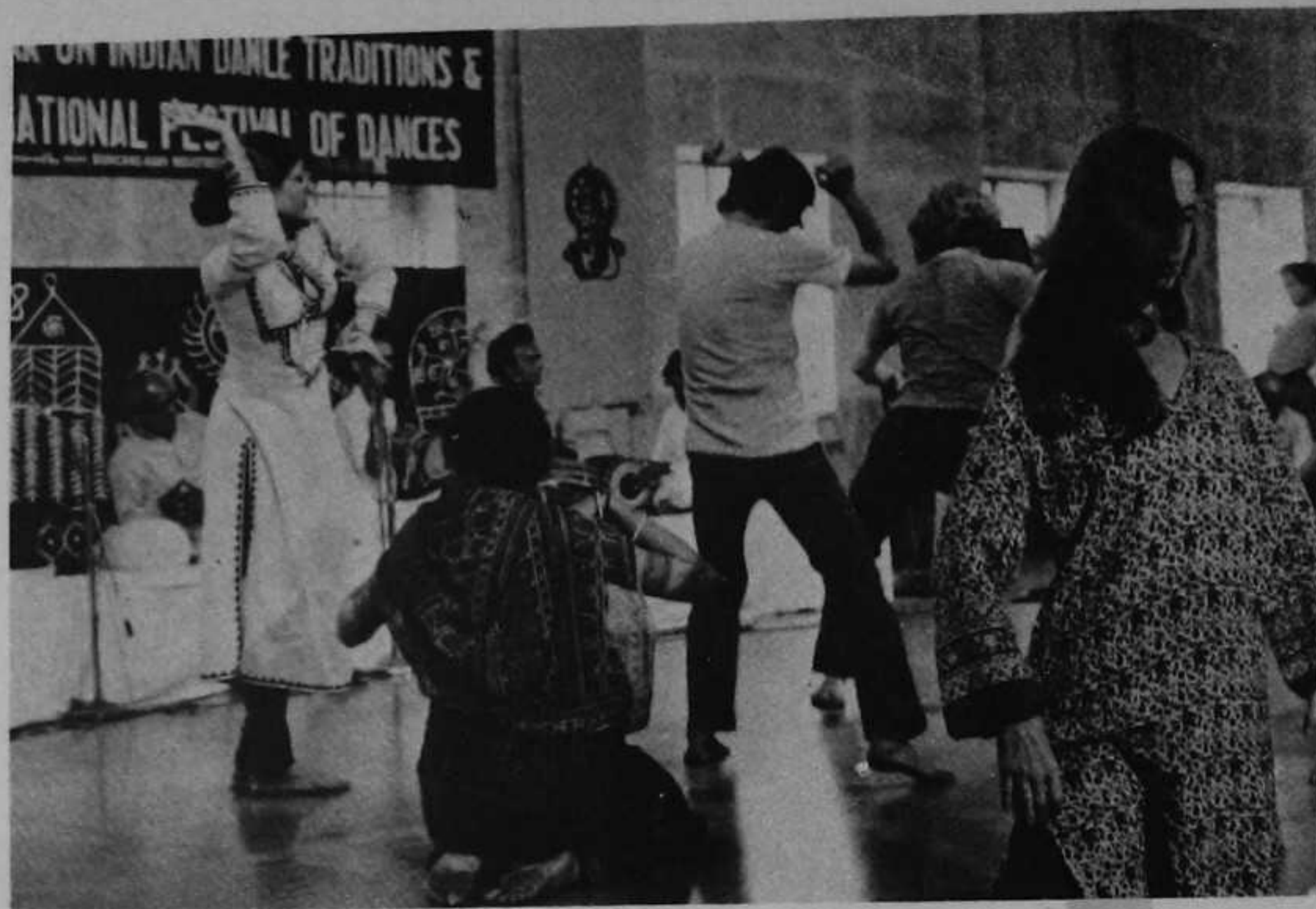
International Seminar and Workshop on Indian Dance Traditions and Modern Theatre and a National Festival of Dances, organised by Padatik in collaboration with the Bharatiya Natya Sangh and the International Theatre Institute (UNESCO), Calcutta, January 2-9, 1983

Padatik, with its two wings (Padatik Theatre Group and Padatik Dance Centre), is an important theatre and dance organisation in Calcutta. In addition to its own productions, the Padatik Theatre Group had often invited outstanding directors from all over India to ensure interaction with its own members and contribution towards mounting various productions.

The Seminar sought to discuss the relevance of classical Indian dance forms to modern conditions and to understand how they ought to be studied so that their techniques could be employed creatively in the production of plays.

There were four sessions every day, with performances in the evenings, and social gatherings at night. If the delegates chose to, they could organise demonstrations and slide shows after the performances.

The demonstrations of Kathakali raised several questions which were answered by Raman Kutty, Padmanabhan, Gopi and others from the Kerala Kala Mandalam. They explained the different aspects of training and *abhinaya* and delegates were quite overwhelmed by the strenuous discipline and brilliant display of technique.



The sessions devoted to the three forms of Chhau were well-received because of the illuminating demonstrations by the Guru Kedar Nath Sahoo (Serai-kella), Guru Krishnachandra Naik and Guru Hari Naik (Mayurbhanj) and Guru Sudhir (Purulia).

The delegates from Indonesia and Thailand demonstrated their dance technique and later on Guru Kelucharan Mahapatra and Sanjukta Panigrahi drew attention to the similarities between Odissi and Indonesian dance forms.

There were demonstrations of Manipuri by the artistes of Manipuri Nartanalaya and Guru Bipin Singh, of Kathak by Birju Maharaj and his students, of Yakshagana by the Yaksha Mandal troupe from South Canara.

The sessions of the Seminar and Workshop were most interesting because they brought into contact—sometimes collaboratively, sometimes with disagreements—persons from the modern theatre and persons from traditional Indian theatre; as well as theatre workers from several cultures: Indian, European, American, Japanese, Thai, Indonesian, Latin American, and more.

Generally the workshops were demonstrations of specific training techniques from genres that were seen in their entirety the night before. Thus we saw how Kathakali, Odissi, Bharata Natyam, Kathak, Manipuri, Yakshagana and other forms work. We then saw how some of these forms had been adapted by Indian directors to create a modern theatre based on indigenous sources. Much discussion and disagreement was focused on how these forms were being used or abused by both Indian and non-Indian theatre workers.

We saw fragments of work by B. V. Karanth, K. N. Panikkar, Prabir Guha, and Shyamanand Jalan. We heard an eloquent explanation by Eugenio Barba on how he became interested in Oriental forms because of the oppositional constellation of body parts that they employ to convey meaning. He went on to explain how he developed a system of actor training based on indirection: taking the longest path from point A to point B, stopping an action midway so that in effect its message is decodified in order to allow meaning to break open into new realms. Anna Halprin demonstrated her methods of making a workshop performance by "reacting to" Kathakali. Tadashi Suzuki demonstrated how he developed a training technique from Noh theatre, Kabuki, and the sitting and standing formalities of Japanese culture.

The work of Panikkar and Karanth was revealing because of their difficulties. Panikkar tried to use elements of the Kerala martial art Kalaripayattu and Karanth tried to include Yakshagana. The trouble is twofold: the performers who are trying to use these traditional arts are not masters of them; technique simply can't be lifted from one context and grafted onto work that comes from another. As Mohan Agashe (Pune) said: A certain metabolism is necessary—the work to be taken from has to be ingested and digested, truly metabolized and made part of the performer's body (and soul) before being re-expressed in possibly a totally new and unrecognizable way.

On some occasions—too few in our opinion, too many in the opinions of others—seminar participants were invited to experience in their bodies the techniques demonstrated. We were among those who got up and did some basic Yakshagana steps and exercises, following the lead of Guru H. Gopal Rao from Karnataka. Even an hour's attempt at doing Yakshagana was instructive—not instructive in the sense of learning Yakshagana, but instructive as an introduction to and indication of the workings of the physical form, in the same way that a first viewing of a genre is an introduction to how a form works visually and theatrically. Through the eyes, mind, body, and soul—there should be no prejudice. And even more important, experience is an additional tool in understanding the infrastructure of a particular form. There are, at least, three avenues to follow in performance research: book learning, observation, and experience. The researcher who categorically rejects any of these is self-deprived.

There are problems though, as evidenced in Anna Halprin's demonstration. She instructed people to think of what parts of the body Kathakali energized and then she developed a short exercise from these associations. Bādal Sircar participated in her exercise—one of the few impromptu workshops during the event. Sircar related to us the difficulties in doing this kind of work in front of a public—especially a public of co-theatre workers and the press. Sircar said he resented people watching him attempt to do private work; and his awareness of that resentment made him self-conscious and unable to go deeply into the suggestions Halprin made. Also Halprin's rudimentary knowledge of Kathakali made her suggested associations seem ludicrous in the light of the complexity of the form. These are true problems with this kind of experiment, although it does not invalidate the attempt.

Jalan's attempt to integrate Odissi into his production of *Shakuntala* revealed another set of problems altogether. Not only was Guru Kelucharan Mahapatra more of a master both of Odissi and comic acting than any of the modern actors, but the whole problem of content and ideology surfaced. By what means can a "modern person" approach a "traditional" play like *Shakuntala* and a form like Odissi (or any other)? Doesn't the desire to do modern theatre originate in the desire to deal with the complexities and inconsistencies of modern life? Traditional texts and forms have lifeviews, ideologies (and religions) implicit in their very being, beliefs that the modern world stands on the edge of. If taken in their classical representation, these forms often project a worldview that is not consistent with the worldview of the modern theatre people using the forms. Or if a modern theatre person's worldview is consistent with a traditional one, in most instances, his/her life is not. This split, this gap, is not peculiar to India, but to most of the world at the present moment.

We are moved by, and even sympathize with the problems of *Shakuntala* as she moves from her father's house to that of her husband's. There is great sentiment and pathos in this situation. But without having to look too far or too deep we recognize other situations which arise from or are contingent upon this acceptance of women as 'object'. The newspapers are full of accounts of bride-burnings and dowry struggles. *Manushi*, a feminist magazine published in New Delhi, is devoted to researching and exposing the problems of Indian women from all walks of life. Recently a convention of Indian women lawyers considered (and rejected) castration as the rightful punishment for rapists, and *The Times of India* reported that in India one woman is raped every two hours, and one commits suicide every twelve hours. These problems, which exist all over the world, should not make us feel guilty about our sentiment for plays like *Shakuntala*. At the same time a modern theatre worker's task is to see and reveal discrepancies between ideology and reality.

Guha's work based on Chhau was the most exciting attempt at using traditional forms. Guha's people did not learn Chhau or imitate it. They reacted to both its energy and its demonstrative style of story-telling. After all, they only had three weeks exposure to it: they were well aware that they had only "met" Purulia Chhau—there was no way that these actors could "absorb" the form or metabolize it for that matter. But Guha's work had an original energy that could not be denied and the use of the Chhau, Seraikella as well as Purulia, masks—not as Chhau masks but simply as masks for the theatre—worked. Expectedly Guha's work drew fire.

Outside the formal structures of the Seminar there were many private discussions on the lawns of the La Martiniere School for Girls—and more discussions at the evening "socials". People got to talk to people. We regret only—as always—that there wasn't more time left for these informal but always fruitful contacts to flourish.

All in all the organizers of the Conference—Samik Banerjee, Shyamanand Jalan, and Naveen Kishore—deserve congratulations and credit. This gathering in

Calcutta was the best of its kind. The performances were generally top-class, the discussions animated, the workshop demonstrations educational and exciting. Most clearly the problems, facing theatre—modern and traditional—not only in India but across the world, came a little more into focus.

—CAROL MARTIN & RICHARD SCHECHNER

Koodiyattom Festival, Koothambalam of Koodalmanikyam Temple, Irinjalakuda, December 9—26, 1982

Ashokavanikamkam, the fifth act of Shakti Bhadra's play *Ashcharyachudamani*, was presented by Guru Ammannur Madhava Chakyar and his troupe in the *koothambalam* of the Koodalmanikyam Temple, Irinjalakuda, from December 9—26, 1982. The programme was organised by Ammannur Chachu Chakyar Smaraka Gurukulam in collaboration with the Sangeet Natak Akademi.

It is now ninety years since *Ashokavanikamkam* was performed in its entirety and this performance marks the first serious attempt in the direction of reviving Koodiyattom of Kerala, the sole surviving art form which still stages ancient Sanskrit drama. Not long ago there used to be annual performances at seventeen temples in Kerala, some of which had excellent examples of theatre architecture in the form of *koothambalam*-s. Now Koodiyattom is regularly performed in only three or four temples and all lovers of this classical art feel that there is an urgent need to save it from extinction. Traditionally it was the Chakyars who performed the roles in the drama, while the Nambiars provided the background accompaniment. Formerly there were eighteen Chakyar families devoted to this art. Today only a few members continue to remain dedicated to the ancestral art. The Ammannur Chachu Chakyar Smaraka Gurukulam was started in October 1982 with the express purpose of training artistes. Two senior gurus, Ammannur Madhava Chakyar and Ammannur Parameshwara Chakyar, are in charge of this training. Their first venture was the staging of *Ashokavanikamkam*. This act can be read in a few minutes but, in the Koodiyattom style, sixteen days are required to enact it. The performance is based on the *attaprakaram*-s (the ancient palmleaf manuscripts preserved by the Chakyar families), which contain minute instructions in *abhinaya* and choreography.

The emotions and background of each character are demonstrated in the form of *Nirvahana* (pre-story recitation), mainly through mime, and every day the performance lasts for about two to three hours.

The bare outline of the plot includes the infatuated Ravana rushing to Ashokavana to woo Sita. She spurns his advances and he unsheathes his sword to kill her. His queen, Mandodari, suddenly appears from behind a bush and frustrates his design. There are six characters: Ravana, Varshavarana (the servant), Chitrayodhi (the minister), Sita, Mandodari and the *chedi* (the maid companion). The character of Sita is represented by a lighted oil lamp placed on the right of the stage and her reactions are suggested by their effect on Ravana.



Guru Ammannur Madhava Chakyar as Ravana in Ashokavanikamkam
(Picture: Courtesy, Sangeet Natak Akademi).

On the first day, Ravana (who is accompanied by Varshavaran) contemplates the beauty of Sita and, as he pines for her, he mistakes the moon for the sun. Then he remembers that he has banished the sun from Lanka because of his misdeeds. "Has the sun dared to return?" he asks himself angrily. He enacts in detail the story of the sun's banishment and then he realises he has made a mistake and is ashamed of his plight.

From the second to the eight day, the whole episode of Sita being abducted is enacted. The actor who plays Ravana alone impersonates all the other characters involved in this dramatic incident: the defeat of the *deva*-s by Ravana, the pulling out of Mount Kailasa, then throwing it up again and again, the quarrel between

Shiva and Parvati, the rivalry between Ravana's ten pairs of eyes, each of which loves to feast on Sita's beauty, the actual kidnapping ending in the fight with Jatayu.

The ninth day features Ravana's arrival in Ashokavana and his attempts to create an erotic atmosphere by causing the clouds to shower flowers, the wind to produce fragrant breezes, and the moon to flood Lanka in a cool, pleasing light. At this stage Ravana enacts the incident which caused the moon to be his servant.

On the tenth day, Chitrayodhi describes the experiences of the citizens of Lanka who now enjoy moonlight after a long interval of its absence.

On the eleventh and twelfth days, Chitrayodhi enacts the story of the origin of the moon, how it emerged out of the churning of the ocean. He reverts to the account of Lanka's citizens now basking in the light of the moon.



Koothambalam of Koodalmanikyam Temple, Irinjalakuda.

On the three days which follow, Chitrayodhi reports to Ravana the preparations made by Rama to rescue Sita. At this point he describes the ten incarnations of Vishnu and Rama's divine powers. Chitrayodhi utters a word of caution: Ravana, who had defeated the *deva*-s, is now under the spell of Kamadeva. But Ravana refuses to see reason.

On the final day, Ravana, in full glory, approaches Ashokavana. He presses his suit with Sita, who rejects his advances with supreme contempt. The enraged Ravana raises his sword to behead her. At this point Mandodari, who is concealed behind a bush, intervenes and stops him.

The entire performance was recorded on videotape by the Sangeet Natak Akademi.

—G. VENU

Statement about ownership and other particulars about the Quarterly Journal of the National Centre for the Performing Arts to be published in the first issue every year after last of February.

FORM IV
(See Rule 8)

1. Place of publication : Nariman Point, Bombay 400 021.
2. Periodicity of its publication : Quarterly.
3. Printer's Name : Shri M. N. Palwankar
Whether citizen of India : Yes.
Address : Tata Press Limited,
414, Veer Savarkar Marg,
Bombay 400 025.
4. Publisher's Name : Shri J. J. Bhabha
Whether citizen of India : Yes.
Address : National Centre for the Performing Arts,
Nariman Point,
Bombay 400 021.
5. Editor's Name : Dr. Kumud Mehta
Whether citizen of India : Yes.
Address : National Centre for the Performing Arts,
Nariman Point,
Bombay 400 021.
6. Names and addresses of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one percent of the total capital. : The journal is owned by a non-profit-making philanthropic organisation and is published on a non-commercial basis. No individual owner.

I, J. J. Bhabha, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

J. J. BHABHA

Signature of Publisher

Date: 1-3-1983



Pandit Ravi Shankar presenting the Kalidas Samman to Shombhu Mitra

In 1981, the Government of Madhya Pradesh instituted Kalidas Samman, a National Award of Rupees one lakh, for the creative arts. It is given annually and a different art form is chosen every year. The intention is to honour the highest attainment in creativity in an art form. The Shikhar Samman (of Rs. 21,000) was instituted to honour artistes of Madhya Pradesh for exceptional performance in their fields.

At a function held in Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal, on the 13th of February, 1983, Shombhu Mitra was awarded the Kalidas Samman for Theatre (1982-83). The Shikhar Samman was awarded to Bhawani Prasad Mishra (Literature), Kumar Gandharva (Music) and Ramesh Pateria (Sculpture). Pandit Ravi Shankar presented the awards and felicitated the recipients.

Kumar Gandharva receiving the Shikhar Samman from Pandit Ravi Shankar



Obituaries

Rasiklal K. Parikh (b. 1897), the noted Sanskrit scholar and Indologist, died on November 1, 1982. Responsible for a revival of serious interest in Gujarati theatre arts, his *Mena Gurjari*, in the Bhavai folk form, is a landmark in Indian theatre. His play *Sharvalika* received the Sahitya Akademi Award. His critical works include Kumbhakarna's *Nrityaratnakosha* and a compendium for students on the *Natyashastra*. He was elected Fellow of the Sangeet Natak Akademi in 1975.

Roshanara Begum, so warmly admired by lovers of classical music in India and Pakistan, died on December 5, 1982. She was sixty-two. Born in Calcutta in a family of musicians, she became at a very early age the disciple of Ustad Abdul Karim Khan of the Kirana *gharana*. Her rich voice added distinctive flavour to the style, winning her classical items enthusiastic response from all sections of society. She migrated to Pakistan in 1948 but visited India in 1975 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of AIR where she had worked formerly. She was the recipient of the Pride of Performance Medal in Classical Music instituted by the Government of Pakistan.

Hiradevi Mishra (b. 1926), the popular *ghazal* and *thumri* singer, died on January 7, 1983. Among her teachers were Pandit Sarju Prasad Mishra, Ustad Ata Khan of the Patiala *gharana* and her husband, Pandit Kamal Mishra. She could invest every variety of the *Purab ang* (of eastern Uttar Pradesh) with warmth and sensitivity as was evident, even to those who had not attended her concerts, in her songs in the film *Gaman*.

Dr. C. Sivaramamurthi, renowned Sanskrit scholar and art historian, and former director of the National Museum, died on February 6, 1983. Among his major achievements are *Nataraja in Art, Thought and Literature*, *L'Art en Inde* (translated in the major European languages) and his publications on Amaravati Sculptures, Indian Epigraphy and South Indian Scripts, Bronzes, and the *Chitra-sutra* of the *Vishnudharmottara*. He was elected Honorary Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, and awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1976.

Book Reviews

MUTTUSVAMI DIKSHITA-KRITI-SANGRAHA, Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, 1980, Rs. 50.00 (*In Hindi*).

This book presents thirty-one *kriti*-s of Muttusvami Dikshitar in Bhatkhande notation. As pointed out by Dr. B. C. Deva in the Preface, the basic intention of this work is to familiarise the Hindustani music world with the life and work of this great composer of Karnatic music. The two introductory articles by Narayana Menon and N. S. Ramachandran provide useful information on the life and attainments of the composer, and the *raga* and *tala* traditions followed by him. Dr. Menon sets a healthy trend, focussing on an evaluation of the compositions themselves and the musical merits of the composer rather than on his other qualities, human and divine. Srirangam Kannan, who prepared the script of the songs in notation, has also contributed an introduction, in which he explains the structure of the *kriti* form and the mode of rendering its various sections. The introductory articles contain worthwhile information, but the value of the song scripts seems rather doubtful. Unaided by tape or disc recordings, the song notations cannot reveal much about the musical structure of the songs, especially to a Hindustani musician.

The selection of the *kriti*-s, which are notated, could have been more representative of Karnatic *raga*-s and Dikshitar's genius. Most of the *raga*-s, included in the book, have Hindustani 'leanings'. Of all the *raga*-s presented here, only Natakuranji and a few others have no parallel in the Hindustani system. While two *kriti*-s each have been included in Hamirkalyani and Hindolam, major *raga*-s like Shankarabharanam, Todi, Bhairavi, Kambhoji, Anandabhairavi and Sahana, in which great *kriti*-s were composed by Dikshitar, have been left out. Dikshitar's greatness as a composer of Karnatic music is thus not fully revealed in this book. The choice of *raga*-s like Dvijavanti is not altogether wise. Although Dikshitar has "Karnaticised" these *raga*-s, as N. S. Ramachandran assures us (p. 18), the Hindustani musician is likely to misinterpret the notation.

The text of each song along with a Hindi translation has been given with its score. Some useful notes have been added on certain philosophical terms occurring in the text (pp.20, 60, 116). Variant readings have also been suggested in some places. One such reading, *shamadamoparatyaadi*, suggested in place of *shamadamopavrtyaadi* (p. 134), is already found in the *Sangitasampradayapradarshini* of Subbarama Dikshitar. While the Hindi translation is useful, there are instances where the original Sanskrit words are retained untranslated (a common fault encountered in several Sanskrit-Hindi translations), thus leaving the text unintelligible to a reader not quite proficient in Sanskrit. For instance, the phrase *jarachorashikhamani* is retained as such, in the translation of the *kriti* *Sri Sundararajam* (p. 154). There are also instances of incomplete translation and skipping of phrases. The translation of the phrase *atyadbhutamandukaanam-aag-amamahotsava-vibhavam* in the same *kriti* (p. 155) is incomplete; the word *sharayanabhava* in the *kriti* *Sri Guruguha* (p. 56) has been missed out in the translation.

The notation has been printed very clearly and the lines are well-spaced. However since each line is spread over two facing pages, the level of a line is occasionally not uniformly aligned, which leads to difficulties in reading (see pp. 94-95, 106-107). This fault could be rectified in the next edition.

—N. RAMANATHAN

SITAR AND ITS TECHNIQUE by Devavrata Chaudhuri. Published by Avon Book Co., Delhi, 1981, Rs. 40.00 (*In English*).

Devavrata Chaudhuri, popularly known as 'Debu' among musicians in India and abroad, has made his debut in the field of applied theory with his book "Sitar and its Technique". He confesses that Indian music can never be learnt in schools and colleges and believes that it should be learnt in conservatoires, in the *Guru-Shishya Parampara*. Even so, he is trying in this work to bridge the gap.

Till now there have been a few books on the sitar. This book deals with every detail of the sitar and its techniques, and contains a brief and accurate history of the development of Indian instruments.

The book is divided into four sections. Section One includes a short survey of the history of Indian instruments from the Vedic age to present times. The discussion is good, except for a few errors of fact e.g. Sharngadeva does not mention *Jantra*, but it is Kallinatha who interprets *Tritantri* as *Jantra*, which was popular in his time.

Section Two traces the origin of the sitar, its structure, primary and sympathetic strings, techniques of playing, the maintenance problems and drawbacks of the instrument and the distinctive qualities of the Senia *gharana*. Here everything is described in detail and in a language easy to understand. Students of music and music lovers will profit from this description. The illustrations of the sitar of seventeen and nineteen frets give a vivid picture of the instrument. Sitar, with seventeen frets, are still used in the Senia tradition of Jaipur.

The discussion on the structure of the sitar is accompanied by pictures of tumba, tabli, neck, dand, pegs, jawari and the complete sitar itself. This will be of interest to readers who are keen to study every detail of the instrument. Fingering techniques, the position of fingers, the way of holding the instrument and the sitting posture, the manipulation of the frets, the movements of the right and left hands, the stretching of the strings (*meend*) all form part of the second half of this section. Every part is explained in a precise manner. The description is supported with twenty-two illustrations. But two points, namely the maintenance of the instrument and the special characteristics of the Senia *gharana*, are repeated here with a slight change in the sentences. This raises doubts about accuracy in the reading of the proofs of the manuscript.

In Section Three, the author very briefly discusses the notation system of our music, the different strokes which are employed, for making characteristic patterns. Some of the technical words used in applied music and the varieties of *meend* are discussed. The concept of *Rasa* and *Tala* is also touched upon. (An interesting part in this section is devoted to exercises for identifying the seven notes in the Devanagari script. This will probably be of use to foreign students.) The different types of *meend* explained through eight illustrative pictures with written directions will certainly help musicians to try the technique on their own.

While playing the veena, the *jhala* forms the last part of *alap*, and never figures in the *gat* (composition). But the sitar has made its own contribution by using this technique at the finale of the recital when the performance is at its peak. This part does fascinate audiences.

While discussing *Rasa*, Bharata explains it only in terms of *Natya*. He speaks of the particular note applicable in creating a particular *Rasa* and in the context of some specific situations in a play. Here, instruments have greater power to create certain *Bhava*-s than the voice. This is why Bharata includes voice under *Tatakutapa* and attaches more importance to instruments.

Section Four deals with the practical method employed in playing the sitar. We are familiar with two types of compositional forms: the *Masitkhani*, and *Razakhani Gat*-s played on the sitar. The author indicates the traditional stroke patterns to be used while playing these compositions. One has to combine the following stroke pattern of 8 beats in the *Razakhani Gat*, in spite of the fact one uses other types of strokes for the completion of the circle of 16 beats. The stroke pattern is as follows:

da dir dir dir / da- r, da -r da

The stroke pattern of *Masitkhani* is well-known to all those who play the sitar, e.g. dir/da dir da ra/da da ra.

Moreover, only those compositions will be called *Masitkhani* or *Razakhani* which are set to Teentala (16 beats) after fulfilling the above condition of the stroke pattern. If a slow or fast composition is set to any *tala* other than Teentala, it should be called *Vilambita* or *Druta Gat* respectively.

In my opinion, there is a little difference between *Pahali Tana* (initial phase) of the Senia *gharana* and the *Pakad* of modern times. Both these give a clean shape and signify the character of a *raga* in the smallest number of notes.

There are distinctions in the order of *thata*-s and *raga*-s. Kalyan *thata* comes first when the names of *thata*-s are listed. But when the notation and compositions of the 10 principal *raga*-s are given, Bilaval *raga* heads the list. There is a difference between the naming and the application of the 10 *thata*-s and *raga*-s. Asavari is considered in the former part whereas a composition on Jaunpuri is considered in the latter part. The explanation given by the author to the reviewer was that, in the Senia tradition, Asavari is considered as the modern Komal Rishabha Asavari and this tradition does not consider the practical application of Shuddha

Rishabha Asavari. But it does consider Jaunpuri with Shuddha Rishabha. It is interesting to note that, contrary to this view, Pandit Omkarnath Thakur never considered Jaunpuri a different *raga*. He said that in his tradition two types of Asavaris (with Komal and Shuddha Rishabhas) were sung or played and no *raga* like Jaunpuri was ever sung. Pandit Bhatkhande and a few other scholars considered the two types of Asavaris (with Shuddha and Komal Rishabhas respectively) and Jaunpuri as three different *raga*-s, and Shuddha Rishabha Asavari was considered as one of the 10 *thata*-s.

In the Senia tradition, Jaunpuri is played as *Aduva-Shadava* i.e. five notes in the ascending and seven notes in the descending order. This is a distinct characteristic of the Senia tradition. In the other traditions, Asavari is played with *Shadava-Sampurna svara*-s (six in the ascending and seven in the descending order). There is a little confusion in the description of Jaunpuri. As *Ragajati* the author says it is *Shadava-Sampurna*, but in the compositional part it is described as *Aduva-Sampurna*. He does not give any reason in the book why *Dhaivata* has not been taken, although it is usually used in *Arohi*.

The compositions are no doubt unique but if a few compositions of the Senia tradition (to which the author belongs) were given it would add greater value and interest to the book.

There are many printing errors in the text, which suggests that the book was published in a hurry. There are mistakes like Sampooram, the sign of Komal Ni in Bhairava in the *thata* order, and the sign of both Ga and both Ni in the notation of the composition in Bhairava. Most surprisingly, the Errata itself has the 'correct' and 'incorrect' placed wrongly. Had the final proof been read with care, these errors could have been avoided.

The forty-six illustrations with appropriate descriptions will be of help to students of music during practice. I agree with Dr. (Mrs.) Sumati Mutatkar, who has written the Foreword to the book, that the recorded sound of the compositions and verbal descriptions of the major and minor techniques of playing would have helped to give overall value and utility to the book.

— INDRANI CHAKRAVARTI

KERALA FOLK LITERATURE by Chummar Choondal, Kerala Folklore Academy, Trichur, 1980, Rs. 200.00 (*In English*).

Kerala has a rich and varied folk tradition and an enormous amount of folk literature is also available. The book under review is "a brief survey of folk literature in Kerala" undertaken with "a socio-cultural and historical perspective".

While the attempt to collect and compile the scattered wealth of material on the subject into a single volume is commendable, one wonders if the present book even nominally fulfils this objective. A research work should add something new and original to the existing knowledge on a given subject. The different chapters of the book mention a large number of folk forms and traditions and superficially refer to the work done by other scholars. But the book does not go much beyond this limited framework. The history of Kerala's folklore, its socio-cultural significance, and even the evolution and development of its folk literature receive only casual treatment in the book.

Some of the translations of Malayalam folk songs or even proverbs and riddles hardly do justice to the original. There are several printing errors which point to careless proof reading. The black-and-white photographs and the colour reproductions are of very poor quality.

One may concede that, in spite of all these shortcomings, a book of this kind is a welcome addition to the literature on our folk traditions, but not many serious students of the subject will have access to it: the exorbitant price of Rs. 200/- is totally disproportionate to the material available in the book and its value!

—K. S. C.

Rishabha Asavari. But it does consider Jaunpuri with Shuddha Rishabha. It is interesting to note that, contrary to this view, Pandit Omkarnath Thakur never considered Jaunpuri a different *raga*. He said that in his tradition two types of Asavaris (with Komal and Shuddha Rishabhas) were sung or played and no *raga* like Jaunpuri was ever sung. Pandit Bhatkhande and a few other scholars considered the two types of Asavaris (with Shuddha and Komal Rishabhas respectively) and Jaunpuri as three different *raga*-s, and Shuddha Rishabha Asavari was considered as one of the 10 *thata*-s.

In the Senia tradition, Jaunpuri is played as *Aduva-Shadava* i.e. five notes in the ascending and seven notes in the descending order. This is a distinct characteristic of the Senia tradition. In the other traditions, Asavari is played with *Shadava-Sampurna svara*-s (six in the ascending and seven in the descending order). There is a little confusion in the description of Jaunpuri. As *Ragajati* the author says it is *Shadava-Sampurna*, but in the compositional part it is described as *Aduva-Sampurna*. He does not give any reason in the book why *Dhaivata* has not been taken, although it is usually used in *Arohi*.

The compositions are no doubt unique but if a few compositions of the Senia tradition (to which the author belongs) were given it would add greater value and interest to the book.

There are many printing errors in the text, which suggests that the book was published in a hurry. There are mistakes like Sampooram, the sign of Komal Ni in Bhairava in the *thata* order, and the sign of both Ga and both Ni in the notation of the composition in Bhairava. Most surprisingly, the Errata itself has the 'correct' and 'incorrect' placed wrongly. Had the final proof been read with care, these errors could have been avoided.

The forty-six illustrations with appropriate descriptions will be of help to students of music during practice. I agree with Dr. (Mrs.) Sumati Mutatkar, who has written the Foreword to the book, that the recorded sound of the compositions and verbal descriptions of the major and minor techniques of playing would have helped to give overall value and utility to the book.

— INDRANI CHAKRAVARTI

KERALA FOLK LITERATURE by Chummar Choondal, Kerala Folklore Academy, Trichur, 1980, Rs. 200.00 (*In English*).

Kerala has a rich and varied folk tradition and an enormous amount of folk literature is also available. The book under review is "a brief survey of folk literature in Kerala" undertaken with "a socio-cultural and historical perspective".

While the attempt to collect and compile the scattered wealth of material on the subject into a single volume is commendable, one wonders if the present book even nominally fulfils this objective. A research work should add something new and original to the existing knowledge on a given subject. The different chapters of the book mention a large number of folk forms and traditions and superficially refer to the work done by other scholars. But the book does not go much beyond this limited framework. The history of Kerala's folklore, its socio-cultural significance, and even the evolution and development of its folk literature receive only casual treatment in the book.

Some of the translations of Malayalam folk songs or even proverbs and riddles hardly do justice to the original. There are several printing errors which point to careless proof reading. The black-and-white photographs and the colour reproductions are of very poor quality.

One may concede that, in spite of all these shortcomings, a book of this kind is a welcome addition to the literature on our folk traditions, but not many serious students of the subject will have access to it: the exorbitant price of Rs. 200/- is totally disproportionate to the material available in the book and its value!

—K. S. C.

Record Reviews

Pankaj Udhas in *Tarrannum* (*ghazal-s*).
MUSIC INDIA 2 LP Set 2675 507 (Stereo).

An Evening with Nina and Rajendra Mehta (*ghazal-s*).
MUSIC INDIA 2 LP Set 2675 505 (Stereo).

A Team Come True—*Geet-s* by Talat Aziz and Penaaz Masani.
MUSIC INDIA 2393 847 (Stereo).

Mahakte Nagme—A Collection of *geet-s*.
MUSIC INDIA 2393 855 (Stereo).

Saugaat—A Gift of *ghazal-s*.
MUSIC INDIA 2 LP Set 2675 506 (Stereo).

Music from the original motion picture soundtrack of Richard Attenborough's film "GANDHI". Music: Ravi Shankar. Orchestral score and additional music: George Fenton (Conductor).
MUSIC INDIA.

Homage to Mahatma Gandhi and Baba Allauddin. Pandit Ravi Shanker (Sitar), Ustad Alla Rakha (Tabla). Side One: *Raga* Mohan Kauns. Side Two: *Raga* Hemant.
MUSIC INDIA 2311 153 (Stereo).

The Magic of Music—Guitar and Tabla. Brij Bhushan Kabra with Zakir Hussain. Side One: *Raga* Shudh Kalyan. Side Two: *Raga* Kafi.
HMV S/CFPE 3005 (Stereo).

Enchanting Hour with Budhaditya Mukherjee. Side One: *Raga* Yaman Kalyan. Side Two: *Raga* Bhopali and *Raga* Tilak Kamod.
HMV G/ECSD 41506 (Stereo).

Sound of Asiad '82. The Music of IX Asian Games, Delhi 1982. *Sangeetanjali* '82.
HMV ECSD 3065 (Stereo).

Parveen Sultana—*Megh-Manavi*. Ustad Nizamuddin Khan (Tabla), Mehmood Dholpuri (Harmonium). Side One: *Raga* Megh. Side Two: *Raga* Manavi, *Thumri*.
HMV ECSD 2910 (Stereo).

Arvind Parikh (Sitar)—Melody and Grace. Side One: *Raga* Chandrakauns. Side Two: *Raga* Rageshwari.
HMV ECSD 2911 (Stereo).

Ravi Shankar and Zubin Mehta. Shankar: *Raga-Mala* (Sitar Concerto No. 2). London Philharmonic Orchestra. Side One: Lalit (Presto), Bairagi (Moderato). Side Two: Yaman Kalyan (Largo moderato), Mian ki Malhar (Allegro).
HMV ASD-4314 (Stereo).

There has to be a socio-economic, or at least an economic reason along with a musical one, for the enormous popularity of the *ghazal*. How else can one explain the profusion of this form? Much of the fare seems so repetitive that it would be difficult to believe that it is consumed/sold on account of its merit. Fifty percent of the albums under review belong to this genre. Some songs are actually repeats of items on other albums already released. The first number in *Saugaat*, for example, has already been included in a Bhupinder album and was reviewed in an earlier issue of this journal. *Mahakte Nagme* includes a Talat Aziz and Penaaz Masani number which also features in another album released simultaneously and called "A Team Come True". Now this is where the same original tapes have been used twice. But if one listens at a stretch to these eight albums (and it takes a great deal of patience and courage to do this), one would afterwards believe that it was an eight-hour-long *ghazal* rendered by a couple of artistes. So much for the "oneness" of these *ghazal-s*! Both *Saugaat* and *Mahakte Nagme* feature several artistes. At least four of the twenty-six numbers are "castaways" from films, and all by the late music director, Madan Mohan. Chandan Das and Salma Agha are relatively new names to appear on these albums. The lyrics untiringly speak of *Chand Soya*, *Dil Khoya* and similar rhymed trifles.

Pankaj Udhas, and Rajendra and Nina Mehta have double albums with fourteen and twelve songs respectively. Pankaj is by now a favourite with *ghazal* fans. Four albums of his *ghazal-s* have been released and appreciated. Rajendra and Nina Mehta, the well-known husband-wife team, have also presented songs on four albums before appearing in this double one. There is a curious thing about them: their intonation sounds correct when they sing individually, but when they sing together either one or the other seems to sway slightly from the right pitch and you cannot quite locate who it is, all of which creates a feeling of uneasiness whenever they render lines together.

The album featuring Talat Aziz and Penaaz Masani has eight numbers on two sides. Their style seems to be modelled on their own songs which have been successful in the past: actually it is a cross between the film songs of the 'melody era' and the Mehendi Hasan-Ghulam Ali variety currently popular. Listeners who love this style will want to possess this album.

The Gramophone Company of India has released four discs, one each of Brij Bhushan Kabra, Arvind Parikh, Budhaditya Mukherjee and Parveen Sultana. In Parveen Sultana's disc, the *khayal* in Megh receives elaborate treatment. Spanning three octaves, the voice ascends and descends the scales with ease. But the problem in the Megh and Manavi *khayal-s* is that sometimes she does not want to control the fall or rise, and so there is too much of high-pitch singing with nasal intonation and at superspeed. The dignity of the *khayal* form is lost in the process. Her *thumri*, however, stands out as a beautiful piece against this background.

The three instrumentalists—they all play plucked-string instruments—have two things in common. They are not from a family of traditional musicians and (in addition to music) they have been trained in some other discipline. The youngest and the best of the three is Budhaditya Mukherjee, originally a trained engineer, a metallurgist. Here he plays Yaman Kalyan, Bhopali and Tilak Kamod. His technique

is faultless. His *taan*-s are executed with breath-taking speed. Now his sitar has a *jiva* or *jawari* which may be described as 'closed'. This means the tone has attack and decay that are quick but an envelope which allows clarity only at low volume. Consequently, his plucking is more frequent and perhaps leads him to play Yaman Kalyan *alap*, when it has gained momentum, in spurts of plucking. Once he starts the *gat*, he gets carried away and much of the *gat-toda* part is blurred because of his sheer speed. The Yaman Kalyan *gat* which has its *sam* on an odd note (the *Tivra Ma*) is soon drowned in the display of virtuosity and the *raga-roopa*, of both Bhopali and Yaman Kalyan, is lost in the blinding speed of the *swara*-s!

Arvind Parikh plays Chandrakauns and Rageshwari. His playing is clean and there is a certain straightforward simplicity about it. One can see that he is faithfully playing what his teacher has taught him, while what Budhaditya plays has been *inspired* by the same person, Ustad Vilayat Khan! In Arvind Parikh's playing, one has a view of the confines of a traditional system; in Budhaditya's the adventurous element in a young spirit. The tabla accompaniment in Arvind Parikh's disc is, however, not up to the mark and Mohammed Ahmed's playing of *drut teental* conveys the 'feel' of a dated style.

Brij Bhushan Kabra, who was trained to be a geologist, plays the Hawaiian guitar, which he has adapted after the addition of strings etc. It is a very interesting addition to the plucked-string instruments of Indian music. It has a full, sensuous tone, a little like the sarod. But the *chikari* strings betray its western origin. Brij Bhushan's approach is eclectic: the *alap*-s have the stamp of the sarod style but the *drut gat* takes its cue from the *gayaki* style, lyrical and song-like. The instrument becomes quite noisy in the *jhala* portions. Perhaps the artiste should eschew fast *jhala*, and opt for a total *khayal* style in *drut*. The jacket notes do not mention accompaniment by *swaramandala*. This should have been mentioned, otherwise listeners might conclude that the artiste has added 30-odd sympathetic strings to his instrument.

The bunch of records under review is particularly interesting because there are four albums that feature Pandit Ravi Shankar in varied moods and roles. His music for the Ninth Asiad is featured, along with the work of three other composers, on a special disc. Then there is his music for the film *Gandhi* and also his Second Concerto, played at the India Festival in London by the London Philharmonic conducted by Zubin Mehta. And then his sitar solo where he pays his musical tribute to two great men, Baba Allauddin Khan and Mahatma Gandhi.

The album where Pandit Ravi Shankar plays Mohan Kauns and Hemant may be considered, musically, the most satisfying of the sixteen discs under review. Maturity, depth of feeling, reverence for *raga-roopa* and *raga-rasa*, coupled with virtuosity and perfect understanding of the medium of disc music (with its scope and limitations) are evident in this masterly-played offering. One hears both the expected and the unexpected and the listener is moved to a state of bliss.

The music for the Ninth Asiad, however, takes the listeners into an entirely different atmosphere. It lays bare the limitations of *raga sangeet* for 'open-air music'. The welcome song (*Hymn of Asiad*) has been sung by a large choral group. The melody, set in Kalawati, with an occasional Re and with chords that are

simple triads, reflects the sincere words of the lyric. But this melody has been over-worked in many pieces (composed by Pandit Ravi Shankar) that follow. The instrumental orchestration is unsatisfactory, with shehnai, sitar, and instruments of the *vadya-vrinda* kind. The Naval Band tries to play the same melody with some additional harmonies and the effect is barely passable. Dr. Harold Joseph, the composer whose works have been featured on this disc, referred some time ago to the deplorable quality of the brass instruments in the Services Band. This does hamper the quality of the performance and, as a result, Dr. Joseph's compositions have suffered. In one of his interviews, Dr. Joseph stated that the effort to Indianize 'band music' steered him towards our folk music since he found that the *raga* and *tala* aspects of classical music were not quite helpful in the case of brass band renderings. His *March Past* and *Musical Ride* bear him out on this count. The section with folk music excerpts is a very lively and vigorous listening experience.

Music for film (in this case *Gandhi*) is a completely different proposition. The composers have to tailor it to the visual track. George Fenton collaborates with Pandit Ravi Shankar on this project. When a disc is on, the listeners are getting only half the story and it can be argued that the music of a film cannot be assessed by listening to the sound track alone; the visuals are an inseparable part of this experience. However, the disc *is* a separate thing here and can be and is perhaps meant to be heard by people who are not watching the film. When the music of *Gandhi*, is heard as music *per se*, one is left with admiration for the technical accomplishment. But it also leaves a lingering doubt that the great musicians of the Indian tradition may not always be good "composers". In *Gandhi*, apart from *Raghupati Raghav Rajaram* and *Vaishnava Jana to* (where the melody is said to have been provided by Vishnu Digambar Paluskar), we hear many tunes which we had previously heard in Ravi Shankar's music for other, earlier films. Much of what appears in the Asiad album and in *Gandhi* resembles what Panditji has been doing since the late forties and early fifties (from the IPTA days through AIR to *Anuradha* and to the albums with George Harrison in the sixties). One wished that the master sitar player of India had created more innovative music in the present context.

One also harboured the hope that a good conductor, capable of giving a new interpretation of Ravi Shankar's work, would discover and even offer us new insights, not only into that particular work but into Indian music as well. But this expectation is hardly fulfilled by the *Raga-Mala*, Sitar Concerto No. 2, conducted by none other than Zubin Mehta. This music was performed at the Inaugural Concert of the Festival of India on March 22, 1982 at the Royal Festival Hall, London, and the recording followed that performance. The whole concert is close to a sitar solo, since, in their solos as well as tutti playing, the instruments seem to play sitar *taan* patterns, including *sawal-jawab* sections, *tihai*-s, with tympani keeping beat at times. For some sitar cadenzas the strings even duplicate a tamboura. The chosen form itself is a nineteenth century one, and does not come alive. Besides, there is the additional uncertainty with which the composer approaches the large symphonic orchestra. As a result, even with the London Philharmonic and Zubin Mehta, the concerto is absolutely monochromatic. Pandit

Ravi Shankar, speaking about this music in an interview, had said that the harmonic and contrapuntal structure of the concerto would not be heavy or dense and it had been deliberately kept that way so as not to "blur or kill the beauty of the *raga*". But has this aim been achieved in practice?

Some important questions arise here. What sort of future lies ahead for such work? Can this work be performed by other orchestras? Can they ever do it without the composer being one of the performers? Is this a step in the right direction? What was being sought here? Fusion? New Music? Welt Musik?

—BHASKAR CHANDAVARKAR

Published by J. J. Bhabha for the National Centre for the Performing Arts, Bombay House, Bombay 400 023.—Edited by Dr. Kumud Mehta and printed by M. N. Palwankar at the Tata Press Ltd., 414 Veer Savarkar Marg, Bombay 400 025.

Reg. No. 24073/73

Back Cover:

Odissi Mask (Picture by Lance Dane.

Courtesy: Crafts Museum, Office of the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts, New Delhi)